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Lectures on Christian
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LECTURES
ON
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BY THE LATE
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WITH
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ERRATA.

Page 131, line 30, *for Lord, read word.*

142, — 1, *for diverted, read directed.*

176, — 19, 20, *for council, read counsel.*

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[FOURTH SERIES.]

THE REDEEMER OF MAN.

LECTURE I.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS PERSON.

The topics to be discussed in this series:—one person of pre-eminent dignity,

- distinguished in the statements of the Bible:—the vast importance of the subjects into which this inquiry is instituted:—the various doctrines relating to the person of the Redeemer:—the opinion that he was a mere man:—the theory of emanation:—Immanuel:—the union of the Divine and human natures in Christ:—the two natures constituting the person of the Redeemer.

§ 1. WE shall discuss in this series those doctrines which relate to the Redeemer of fallen man. To the mind of that individual who puts with seriousness the question, *How can man be just with God?*—to his own conscience everything connected with that inquiry must appear supremely important. May the Holy Spirit enable us to prosecute our investigations in the spirit of humility, and wisdom, and docility, and deep and serious attention! And may He guide us to a true and scriptural result!

“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,” says the apostle. This inspired declaration narrows the question of which we have just spoken to a very considerable degree. For since man cannot stand, as just with God, on the ground of his

works,—since he cannot by repentance, or by any other means within the compass of his power to employ, secure his own salvation, the whole topic of inquiry is the following: *Is there any other being who can procure for the human race what they are totally unable to obtain for themselves—LIFE ETERNAL?*

§ 2. Now it is impossible to read the Bible, with any degree of attention, without perceiving that it speaks, *uniformly and throughout*, of ONE ILLUSTRIOUS INDIVIDUAL in the character of the *Saviour*. And it is natural—and as necessary as it is natural—to inquire, *Who was he?* and *in what manner was the salvation of man effected by him?* Was he a man in all respects as we are, bearing a revelation from God, and attesting the truth of his mission—or rather proving he was not a conscious deceiver—by his sufferings and death upon the cross? Or was he IMMANUEL, *God with us*, uniting the Divine and human natures in one person,—the latter to qualify him to bear the punishment of sin, and the former and the latter to impart such a moral value and efficacy to the sufferings he sustained, as to render them an honourable channel for the communication of mercy to the guilty in all the methods Divine wisdom should see fit to adopt?

§ 3. Before we proceed, it may be proper to make a few remarks illustrative of the vast importance of those topics of inquiry upon which we are about to enter. There are some doctrines which we at once perceive, as soon as they are stated,—I do not say to be of no value (for nothing which God has been pleased to make known is destitute of value), but—to be doctrines of comparatively minor consequence. Such is not the case, however, with regard to the subjects which are to come immediately under our notice. The simple statement of

the Divinity and atonement of Christ is enough to show that, if they are not the mere inventions of men, they must rank as first principles—as foundation stones in the temple of truth—as stars of the very first magnitude in the hemisphere of Christian doctrine.

On the answer which the Scriptures give to our inquiries concerning the person of Christ depends the decision of the important question, whether we are idolaters, or whether our opponents are wrongfully and impiously withholding Divine honours from the Son of God. For if Jesus Christ be not God, then we who offer to him that homage of our hearts, which is due to God alone, are, without doubt, guilty of idolatry—as really guilty as the worshippers of the deified heroes of Greece and Rome. But if, on the other hand, the Word made flesh was really a Divine person, then do our opponents—puny worms of the dust—equalize with themselves ONE whom angels and archangels adore as God over all, blessed for ever.

The doctrines also of the Divinity and atonement of Christ form an integral part of a system of truth, which stands or falls along with them. Of this system the Deity of the Son of God may be regarded as the foundation. This doctrine is connected in the closest manner with the purpose of his appearance upon earth, and the great design of his sufferings and death,—that is, with the vitally important doctrine of atonement. This doctrine, again, is inseparably connected with the corruption of human nature, and the universal guilt of mankind; from which it is that the necessity of such atonement arises. This, in its turn, essentially affects the question respecting the true ground of a sinner's acceptance with God, the necessity of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, the principle and motive of all

acceptable obedience, and other points of similar consequence. "It is very obvious," as Dr. Wardlaw has well observed, "that two systems, of which the sentiments on subjects such as these are in direct opposition, cannot with any propriety be confounded together under one common name. That both should be Christianity is impossible; else Christianity is a term which distinguishes nothing. Viewing the matter abstractedly, and without affirming for the present what is truth, and what is error, this I think I may with confidence affirm, that to call schemes, so opposite in all their great leading articles, by a common appellation, is more absurd than it would be to confound together those two irreconcileable theories of astronomy, of which the one places the earth, and the other the sun, in the centre of the planetary system. They are, in truth, essentially different religions. For if opposite views of the object of worship, the ground of hope for eternity, the rule of faith and duty, and the principles and motives of true obedience, —if these do not constitute different religions, we may, without much difficulty, discover some principle of union and identity amongst all religions whatever; we may realize the doctrine of Pope's universal prayer, and extend the right hand of fellowship to the worshippers at the mosque, and to the votaries of Brama."

THE PERSON OF THE REDEEMER.

§ 4. Having made these general remarks, we proceed in our inquiries concerning those doctrines which relate to the Redeemer of fallen man. They branch into two general divisions; those which regard *his person*, and those which describe *his work*. Under the first of these divisions, it will devolve upon us to prove that he was indeed Immanuel, or God with us; and

under the latter, to exhibit the various offices and characters he assumed and sustains for the accomplishment of the great plan of human redemption.

Before we proceed to the statement of that evidence which supports, as we believe, the view taken by orthodox Christians of the person of the Redeemer, it will be proper to describe shortly the three great systems—of which the orthodox is one—which have existed, and which are still to be found in existence, with regard to this vital question. “Their features,” says one who has carefully studied the subject, and of whose statements I shall avail myself in the following short abstract,—“their features are strongly marked, and clearly discriminated; and they appear to comprehend all the variety of which the subject admits, because the several opinions which have at some times been exploded, and at other times revived, are always reducible to one or other of these three systems.”

§ 5. The first of these systems is that which affirms that Jesus Christ was merely a man, who had no existence before he was born of Mary; who was distinguished from the former messengers of heaven, not by anything more sacred in his original character, but by the virtues of his life, and by the extraordinary powers with which, on account of the peculiar importance of his commission, he was invested; who, after he had executed this commission with fidelity, with fortitude, and zeal, was rewarded for his obedience to God, his good-will to men, and his patience under suffering, by being raised from the dead, and exalted to the highest honour, being constituted at his resurrection the Lord of the creation, and entering at that time into a kingdom which is to continue till the end of the world, and the administration of which entitles him to reverence and submission from the

human race. Some, who held this opinion formerly, admitted that Jesus was born, in a miraculous manner, of a virgin; while others contended that he was literally the son of Joseph and Mary. The latter sentiment may be said to prevail almost universally among them at the present day. Some said that Jesus might be worshipped upon account of the dominion to which he was raised; while others, who allow that gratitude and honour are due to him, confine adoration to the Father. These two differences, however, do not affect the grand principle of the system. In whatsoever manner Jesus came into the world, he is according to this system ($\psi\lambda\delta\sigma\ddot{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\sigma\oslash$, *i. e.*) a mere man; and whether reverence in general, or that particular expression of reverence that is called adoration, be considered as due to him, it is not on account of any essential property of his nature, but on account of a dominion that was given him by God.

This opinion is said to have been held, in the first century, by a small sect of Jewish converts, called the Ebionites, who received no part of the New Testament but the Gospel by Matthew, rejecting even the first two chapters of it. The opinion, we learn from Eusebius, was openly taught by Theodotus and Artemon about the end of the second century; and the former, we learn from the same authority, was the first who affirmed the simple humanity of the Saviour. It may be traced also in other systems that divided the Christian church before the Council of Nice, which met in the beginning of the fourth century. But after that council, this opinion appears to have been exploded, till the time of the Reformation, when it was revived by Socinus, and propagated among his disciples, who abounded in Transylvania, Hungary, and Poland. It is maintained in the present day by the Socinians.

The grounds of this opinion are those passages in which Christ is spoken of as a man—as inferior to the Father—as deriving his authority and glory from the Father, and as ultimately entering upon the joy which had been set before him as the reward of his work,—passages which prove beyond all question that Christ was truly a man, and that he was in some sense inferior to the Father; but from which it by no means certainly follows that he was only a man, or by nature inferior to him who sent him. It often happens among men, in the army especially, that an individual even of higher civil rank and station than his companion in arms is yet inferior to him in military command.

§ 6. The second opinion concerning the person of Christ is that which was first taught systematically by Arius, about the fourth century. It seems to have sprung out of the heresy of the Gnostics, or those persons who, in the first ages of Christianity, corrupted the doctrine of the gospel by a profane mixture of Oriental philosophy. They held that the Christ was an emanation from the Supreme Mind,—one of those beings whom they considered as filling the *pleroma*,* or habitation of the everlasting Father, and to whom they gave the name of *Œons*. This glorious *Œon*, who was sent by the Supreme Being to the earth, according to some of the Gnostics, united himself to the man Jesus at his baptism, and left him at his crucifixion: according to others, he only assumed the appearance of a man; so that the body which the Jews saw, and which they thought they crucified, was a shadowy form that eluded their malice.† There can be little doubt but that Arius

* *Vide Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, Cent. I., vii.

† Hence this latter class of Gnostics [a name derived from the Greek word *γνῶσις*, which means *knowledge*, especially that which is *profound* or

derived his creed from this source. The creed itself is as follows,—The one eternal God, before anything was made, produced a most exalted creature, to whom he communicated a large measure of glory and power. By this creature God made all things; he alone proceeding immediately from the hands of God, and all other creatures being brought into existence by his instrumentality. This glorious being, after appearing to our fathers of old, became at length incarnate; it animated the body of Jesus of Nazareth, instead of a human soul, and, after partaking of the sorrow which filled up the life of Christ, was, in recompense for this humiliation and obedience, exalted to be the Saviour, the Sovereign, and Judge of mankind.

Arianism therefore exalts the Saviour above the level of humanity; and herein it differs from the system formerly mentioned, or from Socinianism. But it denies that he is truly, or by nature, God, consubstantial ($\delta\muo-\delta\nu\sigma\tauos$) with the Father; and in this respect it is considered by the orthodox to be radically defective.

Arius imagined that his system afforded an easy key to the apparently conflicting passages which speak of the dignity and eternity of the Son of God, and of his inferiority to the Father. He thought that he might be called God on account of his supereminent glory and authority; and that as he proceeded from God, before the existence of any of those things, motions, and successions by which time is measured, he may be further said to have existed for ever, or eternity might be ascribed to him; but that, since he was after all a creature, he must be essentially inferior to the Father. Whether the key of Arius be the proper and genuine one, or only

sublime,] were called by the ancient Fathers *Docetæ*, from $\delta\omega\kappa\epsilon\omega$, “I seem,” &c., because they ascribed a seeming, not a real body to Christ.

a picklock, will appear more fully hereafter. If it can be shown that Jesus of Nazareth is *όμοούσιος* with the Father, it will subvert the system of Arius, as well as that of Socinus.

The system of Arius struggled through a short-lived existence. Before the end of the fourth century, it was nearly extinct, and did not revive again till the seventeenth century; when the minds of men, rebounding from the slavery in which they had been so long held, carried freedom of inquiry in religion to unlicensed and licentious speculation, and so the monster was again quickened into life.

§ 7. The third system concerning the person of Christ is that which considers him as being Immanuel, God with us. In other words, as one of the adorable subsistents in the Godhead, mysteriously united to the man Christ Jesus; so that while the two natures are perfectly distinct, they constitute but one person. Thus while the Socinians believe that Christ is a mere man, in whom there dwells an extraordinary measure of communicated power and wisdom; and the Arians, that the Christ consisted of a super-angelic spirit and a human body; the orthodox maintain that Christ assumed, at the incarnation, the complete human nature into union with the Divine,—in other words, that the body of our blessed Lord was animated with a human soul, and that the soul was so united with the Godhead that the Divine and human natures formed, as we have said, but one person.

The following quotations from the Nicene Creed—from the confessions of faith of the churches of England and of Scotland—will show that we have given a correct statement of the orthodox doctrine upon this point. “We believe,” are the words of the former, “in one

God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is to say, of the substance of the Father, God of Gods, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, of the same substance with the Father, by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth, who for us men and our salvation came down, and was incarnate, being made man."

The second of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England is in these words: "The Son, which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man."

The words of the Scottish Confession are these: "The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of the time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance; so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion, which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ."

I have made these quotations, not to sway your opinions by the force and influence of human authority,

for the matter does not depend upon human authority in the slightest degree, but to convey to your minds a clearer conception of those sentiments which appear to us to be consistent with the word of God. Dr. Priestley has laboured hard to show that the Anti-Nicene Fathers were not believers in the Godhead of the Son. If you should happen to attach so much importance to their sentiments as to be anxious to know what they really thought upon this subject, I would refer you to Dr. Jamieson's History of Early Opinions, written in reply to Priestley,—a work of great erudition, and of sound and scriptural statements. I cannot, now at least, enter upon this controversy. My object is to explain and substantiate the sentiments we entertain concerning the person of the Redeemer; and in order to this, it will be necessary to make a few more remarks, before I proceed to lay before you that evidence which, as we think, fully establishes the supreme Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth.

§ 8. We have said that, in that glorious Being of whom we speak, there are two natures united in one person. It is here particularly to be observed, that it is an union of natures, not of persons. Some writers in the second century, in their desire to avoid the heresy of those who confused the two natures, and blended them into one, used such forms of expression as seemed to favour the notion of Christ's being composed of two distinct persons; and this is said to have been the error of Nestorius,* though there is by no means conclusive

* [Nestorius was a native of Antioch, and was instructed in the doctrines of Christianity in the schools of Syria. In the year 428, he was elevated to the See of Constantinople. Three years afterwards, the Council of Ephesus was summoned by Theodosius the younger, and Nestorius was most irregularly condemned. The materials of the Nestorian controversy

evidence that he was guilty of it. Whatever, however, may have been the extent of the error of Nestorius himself, from him is derived that system concerning the incarnation of Christ which is held by a large body of Christians in Chaldea, Assyria, and other regions of the East, and which is known in the ecclesiastical history of the West by the name of the Nestorian heresy. The object of the Nestorians is to avoid every appearance of ascribing to the Divinity of Christ the weakness of humanity; and therefore they distinguish between Christ, and God, who dwelt in Christ, as in a temple. They say, that from the moment of the virgin's conception, there commenced an intimate and indissoluble union between Christ and God; that these two persons presented in Jesus Christ one (*πρόσωπον*, *i. e.*) aspect; but that the union between them is merely an union of will and affection, such in kind as that which exists between two friends, although much closer in degree.

In opposition to this, the orthodox doctrine maintains that the union of the two natures, Divine and human, in Jesus Christ, forms not two persons but one person. It is truly stated by Dr. Ridgley, that the Scriptures plainly speak of the same person as both God

had been collecting for a long period; but the occasion by which they were set on fire was a sermon preached by a presbyter of Constantinople, of the name of Anastasius, a friend of Nestorius, in which he condemned with warmth the title, *Θεοτόκος*, *Mother of God*, by which the Virgin Mary was then very generally distinguished. Some had called her, *Ανθρωποτόκος*, *Mother of Man*; and Nestorius thought that the name, *Χριστοτόκος*, *Mother of Christ*—an intermediate term, by which he hoped to unite the divided church—was the title by which she should be called. Nestorius was banished, and died in exile in Upper Egypt.—Lardner's *Works*, vol. v., pp. 27–32; Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, Cent. V., vi.; Waddington's *History of the Church*, p. 181; Dr. Etheridge's *Syrian Churches*, pp. 54–58.]

and man, and attribute the same actions to him in different respects, which is inconsistent with asserting that the Mediator is both a Divine and a human person; and it cannot be denied, he adds, that it is a contradiction in terms, to say that two persons can be so united as to become one person. It is to be remembered, that the human nature of our Lord never had a separate personal subsistence. It was not formed, and afterwards united to the Divine nature: the union was effected at the moment of the conception of our blessed Lord; and, as Dr. Horsley states, the union of the human nature with the uncreated Word is the very principle of personality and individual existence in the son of Mary.

This union of the Divine and human natures, in the person of Immanuel, is called by divines the Hypostatical or Personal Union. With its nature, or the manner in which it is effected, we pretend to no acquaintance whatever. The Scriptures, we think, merely relate the fact that the same person is both God and man. All speculations concerning the manner of the fact must necessarily be vague and unsatisfactory, or rather, we may add, presuming and blasphemous. With reference to a subject confessedly so mysterious as this, it is by no means wonderful that ingenious men should be able to propound questions which we are unable to solve; but, remembering that in all our researches we are accustomed to perceive that things are united, without being able to perceive the bond which unites them, we shall not suffer our faith to be unsettled in a doctrine which is, in fact, the corner-stone of our religion.

We have said that the hypostatical union was effected at the moment of the conception of our blessed Lord; and since that conception was miraculous, the

existence of the person bearing the Divine and human natures was not physically derived from Adam. According to this view of the matter, as it has been well observed, the miraculous conception gives a completeness and consistency to the revelation concerning Jesus Christ. Not only is he the Son of God; but as the Son of man, he is exalted above his brethren, while he is made like to them. He is preserved from the contamination adhering to the race whose nature he assumed; and when the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, was made flesh, the intercourse which as man he had with God is distinguished, not in degree only, but in kind, from that which any prophet ever enjoyed, and is infinitely more intimate, because it did not consist in communications occasionally made to him, but arose from the union of the human nature with the Divine.

The second remark to which it is necessary to call your attention before we proceed is, that the two natures which constitute the person of our adorable Redeemer are to be viewed as perfectly distinct. This statement is made to guard us against the heresy of the Eutychians, while endeavouring to avoid the error of Nestorius and his followers. The Eutychians believed that the human nature was absorbed in the Divine; or, as some represent them, that the Divine and human nature of Christ were confounded or blended together, after the similitude of things that are mixed together in a natural or artificial way, whereby the composition is of a different nature from the parts of which it is compounded.* This opinion was condemned in the year

* [Eutyches was the abbot of a convent at Constantinople. He boldly declared there was but *one nature*—that of the incarnate word—in the person of Christ.]

451, by the Council of Chalcedon, the fourth general council, which declared, as the faith of the Catholic Church, that Christ is one person; that in this unity of person there are two natures, the Divine and the human; and that there is no change, or mixture, or confusion of those two natures, but that each retains its distinguishing properties. And such is the opinion universally received among the orthodox of the present day. Thus speaks Dr. Pye Smith, in repelling a frivolous objection against the Divinity of Christ by Emlyn. "To make it hold, it must be supposed that the doctrine of the Deity of the Messiah involves a belief that the properties of the Divine nature are necessarily and of course communicated to the human nature,—a belief which, though it has been contended for in the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran communions, few in the reformed churches will, I apprehend, feel themselves at all disposed to vindicate. The Scriptures," he adds, "appear to us, on the one hand, to teach the existence of such a union as producing a personal oneness; and, on the other, to exclude the notion of transmutation, or confusion, or any kind of metamorphosis, of the essential properties of either nature with respect to the other."* In like manner speaks Dr. Ridgley: "Therefore we must consider that, though these two natures are united, yet each of them retains its respective properties, as much as the soul and body of man do, though united together, which is the best similitude by which this can be illustrated, though I do not suppose that in all respects it answers it."† The following admirable statement is given us by Principal Hill. "Since Jesus Christ

* *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., p. 333, Third Edition; vol. ii., pp. 99, 100, Fourth Edition.

† Vol. ii., p. 246.

is both God and man, it follows that each nature is in him complete, and that the two are distinct from one another. If the Divine nature were incomplete, he would not be God; if the human nature were incomplete, he would not be man; and if the two natures were confounded, he would neither be truly God nor truly man, but something arising out of the composition,"* —"his Godhead being debased," as another writer expresses it, "and his manhood advanced." "In this respect," adds Dr. Hill, "the union of the soul and body of man is a very inadequate representation of the hypostatical union. Neither the soul nor the body is by itself complete. The soul without the body has no instrument of its operations; the body without the soul is destitute of the principle of life; the two are only different parts of one complete nature. But Jesus Christ was God before he became man, and there was nothing deficient in his humanity; so that the hypostatical union was the union of two distinct natures, each of which is entire."†

Ridgley supposes that the Eutychians were led into the opinion, that the two natures were confounded, by their desire to avoid the error of Nestorius. They could not conceive of a Divine and a human understanding and will, without conceding to the Nestorians that there were two persons in the Mediator. The Monothelites—an ancient sect, of whom a remnant is found in the neighbourhood of Mount Libanus—disclaim any connection with Eutyches, and agree with the Catholics in ascribing two natures to Christ: but they have received their name from their conceiving that Christ, being one person, can only have *one*

* *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. ii., p. 262.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 262, 263.

will;* whereas the Catholics, considering both natures as complete, think it essential to each to have a will, and say that every inconvenience, which can be supposed to arise from two wills in one person, is removed by the perfect harmony between the will which belongs to the Divine, and that which belongs to the human nature of Christ.

§ 9. But though there is no actual communication of the properties of the Divine and human nature to one another, it being impossible for the Deity to share in the weakness of humanity, or for humanity to be exalted to a participation of any of the essential perfections of the Godhead, yet, as it is one person who possesses these two natures, the properties of each may be ascribed to them with equal propriety. “This is known in the Greek theological writers by the name of ἀντιδοσίς ἴδια-ματων, which the Latins have translated *communicatio proprietatum*—the communication of the properties;” because, as Principal Hill says, “though each nature retains its own properties, there may be said to be a communication of the properties, because the properties of both natures are ascribed to the same person, in so much that even when Jesus Christ derives his name from his Divine nature, as when he is called the Son of God, things peculiar to the human nature are affirmed of him.” “Christ, in the work of redemption,” says the Scottish Confession of Faith, “acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself. Yet by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes attributed in Scripture to the person denominated by the other nature.”†

* [Hence the term by which they are designated, from *μόνος* (*monos*)—*sole, alone, one*,—and *Θελητὴς* (*theletes*), *one who wills* = Sole-willites.]

† *Confession of Faith*, viii. 7.

“ Thus when we read,” adds Principal Hill, “of the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood—that God laid down his life for us—that the Lord of Glory was crucified, we do not from such expressions infer that God could suffer; but, taking the passages from which we had inferred the union of two natures in Christ as a guide, we consider these expressions as only transferring, in consequence of the closeness of that union to him who is called God, because he is God, the actions and passions which belong to him because he is man.”*

The statements which I have now laid before you concerning the constitution of the Saviour’s person have been merely explanatory: in our next lecture we shall enter upon our proof that he was indeed Immanuel, God with us.

* *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 264, 265.

LECTURE II.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS PERSON.

(CONTINUED.)

The substance of preceding lecture:—the proposition to be proved:—the humanity of Christ:—his Divinity, presumptive arguments in support of—the easy solution it affords of many passages of Scripture —the love of God in the gift of his Son involves it—the scriptural representations of the condescension of Christ involve it—the joy and transport of the New Testament writers imply it—the exaltation of Christ supports it—the claims of Christ on the love and obedience of his followers prove it:—the amount and nature of this proof.

§ 1. Our last lecture, which was entirely expository, was occupied with a statement of the orthodox doctrine upon this important subject. We took a rapid glance at the three leading and prominent systems which have been entertained with regard to the person of Christ; and exhibited some of the errors which, at an early period of its history, crept into the church of God relative to this vital topic, that we might be the better able to separate the chaff from the wheat. The substance of the Catholic doctrine may be stated in the following terms:—

That in Jesus of Nazareth there were two entire and distinct natures, not blended so as to lose their distinctive qualities, but united in some mysterious and

incomprehensible manner, so as to constitute but one person, to whom is fitly given the title IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US.

§ 2. Our object is now to substantiate this proposition. The proposition strictly speaking consists of three parts, of each of which it might appear that a separate proof would be necessary; viz. that Jesus Christ possesses the human nature—that he also possesses the Divine nature—and that these natures constitute but one person. Our main effort, however, will be directed to the support of the second of these parts. There were visionaries in former times, as you have heard, who contended that our blessed Lord had only a seeming, not a real body; as well as others who maintained that the Godhead and manhood of the Saviour constituted two distinct persons, presenting in him one (*πρόσωπον*, *i. e.*) aspect. These errors are now, however, utterly exploded. Of the latter, it is unnecessary to say a single word; and of the former, it would be a mere waste of time to say much. We are called upon, in the present day, to prove not that Christ was man, for this no one denies, but that he was God over all, blessed for evermore; and this, as you well know, is strongly contested by multitudes. Rather than omit anything, however, which might be thought necessary to fulness and particularity in a course of Theological Lectures, I shall first state the evidence with which the Scriptures supply us in support of the humanity of Christ; and secondly, that which may be produced in confirmation of his true and proper Deity.

THE PROOF OF THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

§ 3. This is thus admirably summed up by an excellent writer,—

1. He is called a man, and the Son of man, in a very great multitude of instances. The number in which he has this latter appellation is no less than seventy-one. In sixty-seven of them it is given to him by himself; once by Daniel; once by Stephen; and twice by John, in the Revelations. In giving this appellation to himself, it will I suppose be acknowledged that he disclosed his real character, and was what he calls himself, the Son of man. When he is styled a man also, he is described with just such characteristics, those excepted which involve error, or sin, as belong to other men. He is exhibited as meek, lowly, and dutiful to his parents; as hungry, thirsty, and weary; as sustained and refreshed by food, drink, and sleep; as the subject of natural affection; as weeping with tenderness and sorrow; as the subject of temptations, infirmities, and afflictions; and generally as having the innocent characteristics which belong to our nature.

2. The history of his birth, life, and death is unanswerable proof that Christ was a man. Christ was born, lived, and died essentially in the same manner as other men. He increased in wisdom, as well as in stature; wrought with his own hands; ate, drank, slept; suffered on the cross; gave up the ghost; and was buried in the same manner as other men.

3. This point is argued at length, and proved by Paul, in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the passage containing this argument are the following declarations. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same;" and again, "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren."

In the first of these passages, it may be stated, in addition to what this author has said, it is expressly

affirmed that our blessed Lord had a real, tangible, material body. He took part of flesh and blood,—language which can never be made to agree with the absurd doctrine of the Docetæ. The declared purpose also for the accomplishment of which he is said to have done this is totally inconsistent with the sentiment of these Gnostics. It was that he might taste of death for every man,—that by death, or dying, he might destroy him that had the power of death, *i. e.* the devil; and further, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. Now how, it may be asked, could an assumption of the appearance of a man merely have aided in the accomplishment of these purposes? How could it have rendered him capable of dying,—how of sympathizing with his people? Is it credible that the sufferings of our blessed Lord, and that the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem, were mere visionary representations—illusions of the senses? and thus that his life and death are nothing more than a practical lie? It is not less unquestionable that our blessed Lord possessed a human soul, as well as a material body. To increase in wisdom, says the author whom I just now quoted, to be tempted, to be sorrowful, to be dutiful to human parents, together with many other things of a similar nature, are attributable neither to God nor to the human body, but are appropriate characteristics of the human soul. He therefore had a human soul, as well as a human body; and was, in the absolute sense, a man. To this, it may be added that he could not have been a man without it. It is not the possession of a body merely, however perfect the material frame may be, that constitutes a man; there must, in addition to this, be a soul also. From which it follows that the Arian system, which denies to the Son of God a human

soul, and supposes that his body was animated by that super-angelic being of which they are accustomed to speak so much, involves in it a denial of the simple humanity of Christ, and so deprives him of the character both of God and of man. It may be further observed, in support of the complete humanity of Christ, that the prophet states that he made his soul an offering for sin. (Isaiah liii. 10.) That the word soul here does not mean life is apparent, I apprehend, from the following verse, where the same word, *nephesh* [נפשׁ], is used so as to forbid that interpretation of its meaning: “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied;” and again from the last verse, where it is added, “He hath poured out his soul unto death”—an expression which cannot mean that he poured out his life unto death, inasmuch as it would be equivalent with saying, “He died unto death.” In the three verses, the term *nephesh* means, beyond all reasonable doubt, the human soul of the Saviour; and so constitutes a proof of the complete humanity of the Son of God. We proceed with our

PROOF OF THE TRUE AND PROPER DEITY OF CHRIST.

§ 4. This divides itself into two parts: the first contains what we may call presumptive arguments in favour of the doctrine; and the second, direct and decided declarations and statements in its support. There may be, as every one knows, indirect proofs of any scriptural doctrine; *i. e.* passages which do not plainly and unequivocally affirm, but clearly imply it, or shed over it a strong degree of probability. Such is the case with respect to the doctrine of the Deity of Christ. And this is what I mean by the presumptive arguments in its support, and which I now proceed to consider.

FIRST.—*The presumptive arguments in support of the Deity of Christ.*

The validity, and force, and value of this species of evidence will be best seen as we proceed to detail it. I may hereafter direct your particular attention to it, if it should appear at all necessary. Amidst the presumptive arguments in support of the Deity of Christ, I would mention—

First,—the easy solution which it enables us to give of the various apparently opposing and otherwise conflicting representations which the Scriptures present us of the Lord Jesus Christ. At one time he is declared to be God; and at another, affirmed to be man. He is now represented as having existed from eternity; and again, as having been born of a woman in the fulness of time. Some of the sacred writers declare him to have been inaccessible to temptation, and incapable of suffering; and others affirm that he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It is said of him that he was inferior to the Father—sent by the Father—received a commission from the Father—and executed the work that had been given him to do; and on the other hand, that he and the Father are one. Now, on the supposition that Christ is both God and man, we have a principle of interpretation that reconciles these apparent contradictions; for if the Divine and human nature were united in him, we have no reason surely to be astonished, if we find language respecting him of seemingly opposite complexions, according as he is spoken of, under the one or under the other view of his person. And if this principle of interpretation does produce harmony and consistency in the word of God, this is in itself a strong presumptive evidence that it is correct and well founded. If the “key fits all the wards of this seemingly

intricate lock, turning among them with hardly a touch of interruption, catching its bolts, and laying open to us, in the easiest and completest manner, the treasures of Divine truth," how can we doubt that it is the true key! And in this conclusion we shall rest with more confidence, when we contrast it with the Socinian principle of interpretation—with the key of Unitarianism. For this latter key does not fit the lock. There can, therefore, be no doubt whatever that it is a false key, even though the adaptation of the Catholic key to the various wards of Scripture statement should fail to prove it to be the right key. Socinianism must at all events be wrong. It cannot possibly reconcile the testimony of witnesses who speak in such directly opposite terms, with relation to the same individual. It must apply, as an excellent writer says, scourges, and racks, and screws, and all the instruments of torture, to force from the one or the other a declaration that he did not at all intend to express what his language seems, beyond all doubt, to convey. Socinianism then, I say again, at all events must be wrong. Its key does not fit; we need no further evidence that it is not the right key. Whether the Calvinistic key is such, we have to prove. In the meantime, let it not be forgotten that it unlocks the casket of Divine truth; and that fact affords all but certain evidence that it is really derived from that great Being who stored the casket itself. "Admit," says Dr. Wardlaw, "the double view of the person of Christ, which is here stated, and all difficulty vanishes. The testimony of the different witnesses, elicited without torture, and interpreted without perversion, becomes one testimony. In plain terms, there is, on this principle, hardly a single text that occasions any difficulty to an attentive and ingenuous reader. On every con-

sideration then of fairness and of candour, is not this the view that ought to be preferred, by all who are desirous rightly to obey the injunction of Scripture,—‘Prove all things; hold fast that which is good?’” In the class of presumptive arguments in support of the true and proper Deity of Christ, I would place those general considerations mentioned by Dr. Wardlaw* as implying his Divine dignity; and observe accordingly—

Secondly,—that the view given us in the Scriptures of the love of God, as displayed in the gift of his Son, is another strong presumptive argument in support of the sentiments we adopt on this infinitely important subject. This love is spoken of in terms expressive of its unparalleled greatness. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.) “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John iv. 9, 10.) *Vide* also Rom. v. 8; viii. 31, 32.

Now, if Jesus Christ was merely a human prophet, on what principle of interpretation are we to explain such language as this? To no other prophet do we ever find language applied, in the remotest degree, analogous to this. Why is this the case? Jesus Christ did not reveal more important truths than preceding prophets, for their message was substantially the same with his. He did not reveal the same truths so fully and clearly as some subsequent prophets. Why then, if he were a mere man, by no means essentially differing

* *Socinian Controversy*, Discourse II.

from other prophets, is he spoken of in so peculiar a manner? Why is he characterized as God's unspeakable gift? Why is the love displayed in this gift the pledge and assurance of every other blessing? a pledge so precious, an assurance so decisive, as to convert into a contradiction in terms the very supposition that any other possible good should ever be withheld? Why is it thus exhibited, as without parallel or comparison, not only among the creatures of God, but in the whole conduct of God himself? The whole of the representation is, in my judgment, utterly inconsistent with the notion that Christ was merely a man like ourselves.

Thirdly.—A third presumptive argument in support of the Deity of Christ is derived from the representations which are given us in the New Testament of the astonishing condescension and love of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.) How could this be said of Christ, if he were a mere man? He was indeed poor while in the world; but when, prior to this, was he rich as a man? and when did he become poor? “The answer,” says Dr. Wardlaw, “of our opponents is, that he never became poor. The original word, they say, does not denote his passing from an antecedent state of opulence to a subsequent state of poverty; but his living in poverty, although he was at the same time rich. While he was rich, yet for your sakes he lived in poverty; *i. e.* he was rich in the possession of miraculous gifts, which he might have employed to his own advantage, but he did not, and so lived in poverty.” Dr. Wardlaw defeats and fairly tramples upon the supposition, that, if Christ was a mere man, miraculous powers could have been

placed at his own option, to be employed, if he chose, for his benefit; and thus he confutes his antagonist. But we will let this wild supposition remain. We will suppose that, as a man, miraculous powers might have been placed at the option of Christ, to be employed for his own benefit, and in point of fact really were so; and we will ask why the condescension of Christ, in thus living in voluntary poverty, is exclusively mentioned?—why nothing is said of the similar condescension of other prophets? Moses and Peter and Paul had miraculous powers, as well as Jesus of Nazareth. And if the latter had these powers placed at his own control, so that he might have employed them for his own benefit, the same must have been the case with Paul; and yet no language in the slightest degree analogous to the passage we are now considering is ever employed with reference to Paul. No sacred writer sings of the condescension and love of Paul. This may convince us that the principle of interpretation adopted by our antagonists is wrong; and that the words, as Dr. Wardlaw says, refer to Him who, “although rich as the great Creator and Sovereign Proprietor of the universe, became poor in the assumption of our nature, making no use in that nature of those riches which were all his own, but humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death itself, even the death of the cross! This is GRACE indeed! Grace that shall be the theme, the worthy theme, of everlasting song!”

And if the words of the apostle which have been considered are remarkable, what are we to think of the following language? “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

(Ephes. iii. 17-19.) "What," says Dr. Wardlaw, with great reason, "are we to make of this? If Jesus Christ was a mere human prophet, who, having fulfilled his prophetic commission, attested the truth of it by his death, where is this marvellous, this unexampled love? this love of which the limits cannot be measured? which has a height and depth, a breadth and length, exceeding all comprehension? Differences there may be between this man and other men, between this prophet and other prophets; but no differences can there be, of sufficient magnitude, to justify such expressions as these. On the supposition in question, this language is entirely out of nature. We cannot go along with it; it violates every sentiment of propriety; it is the mere rhapsody of admiration, the unmeaning bombast of eulogy."* In addition to these observations of Dr. Wardlaw, it may be remarked that this presumptive argument in support of the Divinity of Christ rises a step higher than the last. It is not exposed to an objection which might possibly, however unfairly, be brought against it. Supposing Jesus Christ to have been a mere man, the high terms, it will perhaps be said, in which the Scriptures speak of the love of God, as manifested in his mission into the world, is accounted for by the importance and gracious nature of that mission. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The love evinced is not to be sought for in the person employed in the mission, but in the nature of the mission on which he came; viz., as they allege, to reveal the great doctrine of immortality, and to assure all who live virtuously of the certain and ultimate possession of eternal life. The objection is unfounded, because, according

* *Socinian Controversy*, p. 48.

to the Socinian system, since the mission of Christ did in no sense procure eternal life, all who lived virtuously would have risen to the final possession of eternal life, although Christ had not come into the world. And since his mission did not obtain it for them, but only brought them the present assurance of it, it is difficult to see how the mere circumstance of sending an accredited agent into the world—a mere man in all respects as we are—merely to banish from the minds of his fellow men all doubt that they should be finally happy, if they lived virtuously, should be spoken of as a manifestation of love surpassing all parallel and all praise. Besides, it is contrary to fact, to say that the sacred writers, in speaking of the mission of Christ, do not lay the main stress upon the person employed to accomplish it. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” “In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” And again, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Still the objection is plausible, though not solid. The point however to which I wish to direct your attention is, that it cannot even be urged against the argument we are now considering in support of the Deity of Christ. For if it were conceded that the importance of the Saviour’s mission accounts for the high terms in which the sacred writers speak of the love of the Father in sending him into the world, it cannot possibly explain those passages which celebrate his unparalleled love in coming into the world. According to the sentiments of our opponents, Jesus Christ was a mere man—a man employed by God to announce the most blessed intelligence to his

fellow men—a man honoured of God beyond all parallel. Now if the sacred writers had celebrated in high and glowing terms the honour which God had put upon him, in employing him in this mission, it would have been just what we might have expected. But to hear them sing of the matchless condescension of Christ—a mere man thus honoured of God—in deigning to undertake the mission, is, on Socinian principles, utterly amazing. I will venture to say, that a grosser insult to common sense was never offered than by the passages which we have quoted with reference to the love of Christ, *i. e.* if Unitarian principles are true. In what was Jesus Christ essentially distinguished from Paul, if he were a mere man? Why then should we allow that it would be unspeakably ridiculous to talk of the love of Paul, in consenting to be an apostle, and not feel that, if Christ had been a mere man, it would not be less incongruous to sing of the love of Christ? Will it be said that it was the self-devotion of Christ, his coming forward in the prosecution of his mission in the certain prospect of accumulated sufferings, and a painful and shameful death, that renders the exalted terms in which his love is celebrated, not only not extravagant, but perfectly rational and sober? I answer, that it is a libel upon the Saviour, to conceive that he could value his life so highly as to deserve such distinguished praise for not determining to keep it, in preference to enjoying the high honour of being the most distinguished prophet of God, and of purchasing to himself the most exalted rank and glory in the mansions above. And at any rate, if there were any force in this objection, it would apply to Paul as well as to Jesus. Was there no self-devotion on the part of Paul? Did not he know, as certainly as his Master, that he must at length perish in the cause in

which he had embarked? Did he not say, at the commencement of his course, “And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me: but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God?” (Acts xx. 22–24.) And in the same spirit precisely, did he not say, at the termination of his career of self-devotion, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand?” (2 Tim. iv. 6.) Why then, if Christ be a mere man,—why then is the love of Jesus celebrated in such high strains of adoring gratitude, while the love of Paul—a man eminent also for his self-devotion—is not thought worthy even of a distant allusion by any one of the inspired writers? No Socinian ingenuity will ever be able to explain this inconsistency. I verily believe that nothing can remove it, but the supposition that Christ was a Divine person, and Paul nothing more than a human being like ourselves. With this sentiment agrees most exactly the language of the apostle: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

Fourthly.—A fourth presumptive argument in support of the Deity of Christ is supplied us by “the depth of interest, the warmth of admiring transport and adoring gratitude, with which the contemplation of this subject inspired the hearts of the New Testament writers.” This is the statement of Dr. Wardlaw; and I borrow his language in illustration of it. “The thought of the

love of Christ, and of the love of God in Christ, as displayed in the humiliation and sufferings of the Saviour, sets their hearts on fire. The very mention of it fills them '*with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.*' What shall we then say to these things? 'If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31-39.) You will recollect the whole of this most animated passage. "Whence," says Dr. Wardlaw, "these glowing transports? Whence this celestial elevation of spirit? Why does the thought of 'Christ crucified' animate the souls of these writers with such exulting triumph, and bind them to their Saviour and their Lord with such fervent and resolute attachment? Take away the view of his condescension and grace, apparent in his assuming our nature, to suffer and die for the redemption of the lost, and such transports become mere passion, without reason. But admit this view, and all is natural; the cause is adequate to the effect; the effect fully justified by the transcendent grandeur of the cause."

I would only state, in addition to what has been thus ably said by the Doctor, that I know of no way in which a Socinian can account for the language to which we have referred, but by asserting that they were mistaken in the views they had formed of his character. He may, indeed, allege that they anticipated all the ignorance and folly and superstition of the orthodox of the present day, and believed their Lord to be a Divine person, when he was only a man like themselves. I will say nothing at present of the impiety of this supposition; but will merely request you to reflect upon the absurdity of conceiving that the primitive Christians, after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which was to lead them into all the truth,—those very individuals who had the gift of discerning spirits, who

understood all mysteries and all knowledge, could be mistaken on a point of such vital importance as the person of their Master.

Fifthly.—A fifth presumptive argument in support of the Deity of Christ is taken from the account given in the New Testament of the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God. This exaltation is represented as the consequence and the reward of his finished work. “Now,” says Dr. Wardlaw, in an unanswerable strain of argument, “if Jesus Christ was a mere human prophet, who was sent to teach the will of God, and who fell a martyr to the truth, why this strange distinction? Why is this prophet singled out, and invested with glory above the highest archangel, and with all power and authority in heaven and on earth? That he might be superior, even eminently superior, although a mere man, to other prophets and servants of Jehovah, we can very readily conceive. But is not the height of glory, on this supposition, out of all proportion to the superiority of the service? Do we not feel as if Isaiah and Peter and Paul were kept too low? *They* thought not so. *They* felt not so. But why? Because they viewed Him who was the great subject of their predictions, and of their testimony, as in personal dignity, and in important commission, infinitely their superior,—one to whose condescension and grace they were themselves infinitely indebted, and whom they considered it as their highest honour to serve and to celebrate.” The following words assign the true cause of the height of glory and honour to which he was raised. “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man,

he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 6-11.) "Here," adds the Doctor, "is the genuine reason, plainly and explicitly stated; and here all is proportion and propriety. It is right that he who stooped so low, should be raised so high; that he who thus humbled himself, should be thus exalted."

Sixthly.—The last of the presumptive arguments in support of the Deity of Christ may be taken from the high claims of Jesus on the love and obedience of his followers.

"To all the prophets of God," says Dr. Wardlaw, "the commissioned ambassadors of heaven, we certainly ought to feel a warm and grateful attachment. But what mere human prophet ever addressed the people to whom he was sent in such terms as the following? 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.' 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'* Who is this," adds our author, "who advances claims so high, on the love and service and obedience of his hearers? who is not afraid of dividing their hearts between himself and the Father who sent him? If the

* Matt. x. 37, 38; Luke xiv. 26; John xii. 26.

speaker was indeed what we affirm him to have been, the language is suitable to the person." "But if he was a human prophet merely, every feeling of fitness and propriety is outraged. The language has no parallel in the history of prophetic commissions. The expressions are totally destitute of reason, if he was a mere human prophet. The obligation to such supreme love, with all its various expressions, we find it impossible, on this supposition, to bring ourselves to feel; either on account of what he is, or of what he has done. We must qualify the language,—we must dilute its strength and pungency to such a degree as to render it a most unnatural vehicle of the sentiment it was intended to express, before we bring it at all within the bounds of moderation and propriety. But view Jesus Christ as Immanuel, God with us, the atoning Redeemer of a lost world, and all is as it ought to be. The strongest terms that can be selected are not, then, too strong to express his claims on our attachment—his title to the entire surrender of our hearts and powers to his service; nor is eternity itself too long to celebrate his praise. The contemplation of what he is, and of what he has done, disposes us, with all the ardour of a grateful and adoring heart, to join in the song of heaven,—a song, indeed, in which all creation is represented as joining. 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.'"

§ 5. These are what I have called the presumptive arguments in support of the Deity of Christ, because that important doctrine is not asserted in them; nor is it so directly inferred from them, as from those passages which ascribe the incommunicable attributes of Deity to him. I am disposed, nevertheless, to attach great

importance to them—greater than, I believe, is usually awarded to them. They are in some sense similar to those incidental proofs of the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament which are so ably adduced by Paley, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*. They are in perfect keeping with the direct proofs of this doctrine, which remain to be adduced, and cannot, I think, be explained without the admission of it. At the same time, they are so abundant that the adversaries of Divine truth must silence a considerable part of the inspired volume before they can accomplish their object. Socinians have made many attempts to nibble away those texts which directly assert the Divinity of the Saviour; but till they can, not only do this, but expunge from the book of God that numerous class of passages to which we have referred this morning, they will accomplish next to nothing after all.

LECTURE III.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

Direct arguments in support of the proper Deity of Christ—the names of God applied to him:—the name God, John i. 1:—examination of the attempts to set aside the testimony of this passage:—the argument derived from Rom. ix. 5:—correctness of the received rendering:—the address of Thomas, “My Lord and my God,” John xx. 28:—“Thy throne, O God,” Heb. i. 8:—the orthodox view of the last passage reasonable:—“true God,” 1 John v. 20.

DIVINE NAMES APPLIED TO CHRIST.

§ 1. WE proceed to consider the direct arguments in support of the true and proper Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are derived from the ascription of the names—the perfections—the works—and the worship, which belong to the true God, to him. This you will immediately see is the common order in which the proof of the Divinity of Christ, with which the sacred volume supplies us, is arranged. It might have been possible, perhaps, to adopt another mode of arrangement, bearing upon it the appearance of greater novelty. I have not, however, been able to fix upon any other so well adapted to bring the subject in all its bearings before us; and therefore I shall follow the multitude.

Our FIRST class of proofs is found in those passages where the NAMES of God are applied to Jesus Christ. If there are cases in which such names are attributed to the Saviour, and that manifestly not in the subordinate sense in which some of them at least are at times used, the conclusion is irresistible that he must be God. Amongst these names, we mention *that of God*, as the first in order and importance. In the following passages, we contend that the name GOD, in the absolute and unqualified sense of the term, is applied to him.

§ 2. John i. 1: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” At the first view of the passage, we might suppose—so decided an attestation does it appear to bear to the Divinity of the Saviour—that it would be impossible for any degree of ingenuity to neutralize its testimony. Attempts, however, have been made to do this; the perfect fallacy of which we must endeavour to point out. It is not pretended, I believe, that the passage in question is an interpolation. Our antagonists, indeed, are much addicted to the practice of throwing overboard a sturdy text, when they cannot silence its testimony; but the words before us are permitted to remain. There are two or three methods, however, by which they aim to rescue themselves from the obligation which this passage lays upon them to receive the doctrine of the true and proper Deity of Christ. The term *logos* [λόγος] it has been pretended does not mean a person, and of course does not prove the Divinity of the second person of the Trinity, but an attribute, or abstract quality personified. We answer—

§ 3. *First*,—that this gloss is at variance with the whole context. “The λόγος was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the

only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." How could this be said of an attribute? What can we understand by a perfection becoming flesh, and dwelling among us, and appearing in the glory of the Father, "full of grace and truth?" It can be nothing but the figure called nonsense, if the words are not to be literally understood. The terms employed by the sacred penman will not apply to an attribute, without absurdity; and that they were intended to apply to a person, the following verses (even the person of Jesus of Nazareth) place beyond all doubt. "John bare witness of him," (of whom? of this *λόγος* who was made flesh,) "and cried, saying, This is he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me. And of his fulness" (the reference is still the same, still to the *λόγος*,) "have all we received, and grace for grace." And the next verse states in plain terms to whom the reference is made. We have received grace from him; for he adds, "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The application of the title to Christ is also placed beyond all controversy, as it has been well observed, by the use of it elsewhere, in the writings of this same apostle. He thus commences his First Epistle: "That which was from the begining, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life." Is it possible to deny that he referred here to Christ? and the similarity between the opening of the Epistle, and the introduction to the Gospel, is so striking as to leave no doubt, in any considerate and candid mind, whether the Word in the latter means the same person with the Word of life in the former.

Secondly.—I observe the gloss is not only at utter

variance with the context, but with the whole strain of Scripture; which, though it sometimes declares that God is an attribute, never, unless here, asserts that an attribute is God. We find it said that "God is light," and that "God is love;" and the phraseology may be regarded as a natural and an expressive mode of affirming his full and perfect possession of infinite wisdom, and holiness, and goodness. But it is not said, on the other hand, that light is God, or that love is God; the language would be forced and unnatural, not to say impious. This method of silencing this passage being found untenable, Socinians have proposed others. Mr. Cappe translates the clause, "God was the Word," admitting that the Word means Christ, and paraphrases it thus: "Jesus Christ was so fully instructed and qualified and authorized for the errand upon which God sent him, that it was not so properly he that spake to men, as God that spake to them, by him." Upon this paraphrase it may be observed—

1. That it violates a rule of Greek construction. The words are ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. That rule is as follows,—In the Greek language the subject of a proposition is distinguished from its predicate, by prefixing the article to the subject, and giving no article to the predicate. In Mr. Cappe's rendering, God (Θεὸς) is made the subject, and λόγος the predicate. In our version, this is reversed,—λόγος is the subject; and as Θεὸς is destitute of the article, and λόγος possesses it, our rendering is in harmony with the rule of construction, and Mr. Cappe's at variance with it. The following examples may be appealed to in support of the rule. Herodotus says, Νὺξ ἡ ἤμερα ἐγένετο σφὶ μαχόμενοισι.—"The day was turned into night before they had done fighting." Here it is only by means of the

article that we know this to be the meaning. Take from *ἡμέρα* the article, and prefix it to *νὺξ*, and the sense will be inverted; it will be then the night was turned into day,—a rendering equivalent with Mr. Cappe's God was the Word. The following instances from the New Testament support the rule. John iv. 24: "God is a Spirit." Here God is manifestly the subject, and Spirit the predicate; the former therefore should have the article. Accordingly we read, *πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός*; precisely in the case before us, *Θεός ὁ λόγος*. *Vide* also John xvii. 10; Luke xv. 31. We observe—

2. That admitting the translation, the sense of this paragraph could never be drawn out of the words by any process of honest grammatical interpretation. A fair paraphrase is an expansion and explication of a meaning, which is first shown to be in the sentence paraphrased; but here a meaning is arbitrarily put upon the words—a meaning not deduced from any construction of the words themselves, but drawn from the writer's previous hypothesis. Driven from this hold, our opponents flee to another. Mr. Belsham tells us that the passage should be rendered, "The Word was a God;" and that the term God is to be understood in an inferior and accommodated signification. Mr. Belsham grounds his opinion on the absence of the article from the term God. The word is therefore, he affirms, used indefinitely and loosely: the expression does not mean that he was the supreme God, but a God in the sense in which magistrates and Divine messengers are called Gods. On this we observe—

1st,—that the absence of the article is in strict harmony with the principles of Greek construction, as we have already seen, which require the article to be attached to the subject, and not to the predicate. It is

impossible, therefore, to infer from the fact, that Θεός is destitute of the article, that it is to be understood in an indefinite and secondary sense. But I observe—

2dly,—that this cannot be inferred from the absence of the article, because the word Θεός stands without the article in various places in this very chapter, where it must be understood in its highest sense. “There was a man sent from God” (verse 6); and “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God” (verse 12): “No man hath seen God at any time” (verse 18). In all these instances, the word God is evidently used in its primary and unqualified signification; yet in no one of these is it accompanied with the article. Why then, we ask, does not Mr. Belsham render these passages, “A man was sent from a God;” “to them gave he power to become the sons of a God;” “who were born of a God?” Or why does he render the words before us “The Word was a God?” We require consistency in our opponents.

3rdly.—We observe that, though the term God is sometimes used in an inferior and subordinate sense, it cannot be so used here, for the following reasons.

(*First*).—“On a comparison of those instances with the one before us, every one must perceive a palpable difference. In all of these,” continues Dr. Smith, “either by a strong antithesis in the connection, or by some other equally marked circumstance, the figurative application is so very manifest that the most careless or perverse reader cannot fail to be impressed with it.”*

(*Secondly*).—“This use of the word is evidently declined by the writers of the New Testament. The few places in which an apparent instance occurs have either

* Dr. Pye Smith’s *Scripture Testimony*, vol. iii., p. 87, Third Edition; vol. ii., pp. 226, 227, Fourth Edition.

a reference to the passages in the Old Testament, or they allude to heathen opinions. *Vide* John x. 34, 35; 1 Cor. viii. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 4. But if, in the passage before us, the term God—standing as it does in the most unguarded, unrestrained, and absolute manner—be taken in the infinitely inferior sense, it would be reasonable to expect the same phraseology, in the same naked manner, to occur, as the current and ordinary style of the New Testament writers.”*

(*Thirdly.*)—It appears incredible that, if the evangelist had merely intended to intimate the prophetical office of Christ, and the power and authority with which he was invested, he should have adopted phraseology which by no means naturally conveys that idea, and was peculiarly obnoxious to dangerous misapprehension. If Jesus Christ be not God, in the proper sense of the term, the language we are considering is calculated to mislead; to the Jew it would be offensive, and to the Gentile it would appear as plainly harmonizing with his accustomed polytheism. Is it conceivable, I ask, that in a book—an inspired book—of which it is one of the leading designs to assert and establish the existence, dominion, and worship of one God, in opposition to all idols and idolatry, one of the writers, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, should begin his portion of it with the very language of paganism—with language so favourable, in the first impression which it necessarily makes upon the mind, to the notion of a supreme and subordinate deities?

There is yet another Socinian gloss upon these words, which remains to be noticed before we pass altogether from this passage. It is hinted at by the editors of the Improved Version of the New Testament,

* *Vide ut supra.*

i. e. the Unitarian version; though they translate the words, “The λογός was a God,” i. e. in a subordinate sense. The gloss is this. Jesus Christ was not himself truly God, but he was a God,—he was in the room of God, the representative of God to mankind. The Socinian editors refer us to the first verse of the seventh chapter of Exodus, in which Moses is declared to be a God to Pharoah; i. e., as the expression is explained in the fourth chapter, verse 16, instead of God—the relation in which Moses stood to Aaron. “But is this expression, I ask,” says Dr. Wardlaw, “in which a person, acknowledged on all hands to have been a mere human prophet, is spoken of, in an address by Jehovah himself, as made or appointed God, to a particular individual, on a particular occasion, and for a specific design, to be considered as parallel to the one before us, in which, without the application of a single restrictive term, and without the smallest trait that should lead to the idea of representation or vicegerency, it is simply affirmed that the Word was God? For my own part, I can hardly bring myself to conceive how any one can assert the parallelism of the two cases, who is not searching for support, which he finds extremely scanty, to a preconceived and favourite opinion.”

§ 4. The second of those passages in which the name of God, in the proper sense of the term, is applied to Christ, and to which I shall call your attention, is Rom. ix. 5: “*Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.*”—ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὧν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

This passage, as well as the last, our opponents are constrained to admit to be *genuine*; and in the *correct reading* of it, there is the full consent of manu-

scripts, versions, and Fathers. All the ancient versions, as well as all the manuscripts, support, according to the testimony of Mill, the present reading; and Griesbach does not propose any various reading. It is quoted by the Fathers, both before and after the Council of Nice, as a clear proof of the proper Deity of Christ; and there does not appear the least ground for thinking that the text was ever read in any other manner. We may therefore argue from the words as they stand; and the only question is, What is the true interpretation of them?

Now with respect to the received translation of the passage—a rendering which, if it be correct, teaches the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ in terms so plain and decisive, that if there were not another text in the whole Bible on the subject, it ought to settle our opinions,—with respect to this rendering, let it be observed that its grammatical accuracy has never been called in question. Nay, it is expressly admitted by Dr. Clarke to be the most obvious translation of the words. All I believe that has ever been said with reference to them by the opposers of our Lord's Divinity is, that they will bear a different sense; and therefore they give them a different sense,—thus rendering, not according to the most obvious signification of the words, but in conformity with their preconceived notions. In addition to the received translation, Dr. Clarke suggests the two following as capable of being extracted from this passage, by altering the punctuation. If the stop be placed at *κατὰ σάρκα*, the whole may be rendered “as concerning the flesh Christ came. God, who is over all, be blessed for ever.” If at *πάντων*, “of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all. God be blessed for ever.”

§ 5. In support of the received translation, your attention is required to the following remarks.

The first respects the clause *τὸ κατὰ σάρκα*. It is evidently a limiting clause. As the last and most illustrious of the privileges enjoyed by the Jews, he mentions the relation of the Messiah to them. The Christ descended from them. He thinks it necessary to add, however, *τὸ κατὰ σάρκα—secundum id quod pertinet ad carnem*,—clearly a clause of limitation, which necessarily implies that there were circumstances pertaining to the Christ, in respect of which he did not descend from the Israelites; and which leads us to look forwards to the remaining part of the sentence for the other member of the antithesis, which member, however, cannot be found, if the period be placed at *σάρκα*. The second remark is, that ὁ ὥν, being a relative expression, must refer to the foregoing noun as the subject, while that which follows is the predicate, except in cases where there is no preceding nominative, but the article contains the predicate, and becomes in effect a pronoun, as Matt. xii. 30: ‘Ο μὴ ὥν μετ’ ἐμοῦ, “He who is not with me,” &c. ‘Ο ὥν, from the nature of the expression being relative, is connected with ὁ Χριστὸς: so that the stop, as proposed by Dr. Clarke and the editors of the Improved Version, must not be placed at *σάρκα*; it would be forcibly separating the relative and antecedent.

The third remark is, that the received rendering, by referring the last clause to Χριστὸς, supplies us with the very antithesis to *τὸ κατὰ σάρκα*, which, as it was stated a little while ago, we want. The former clause is evidently incomplete. As it respects the flesh, Christ descended from the Jews. The words clearly imply that he sustained another character; but they give us no information with reference to it. Now if the received rendering be retained, we have this information, but not otherwise. He descended from the patriarchs as it

regards the flesh; but he was at the same time God over all, blessed for evermore.

The last remark is, that the complete description which the apostle gives of ὁ Χριστὸς, according to our translation, is perfectly agreeable to the general scope of his discourse in this place. He wishes to magnify the honours of his nation: he has enumerated many of their privileges; and he concludes by crowning all of them with the mention of this, that he who is God over all, when he assumed the human form, took a body from the seed of Abraham.

The evidence supplied by these considerations, in favour of the received translation, is confirmed by attending to the consequences which result from adopting either of the other two renderings. By putting a stop at κατὰ σάρκα, the information concerning ὁ Χριστὸς is incomplete. Then is introduced most abruptly a doxology to God the Father; and the form of expression in this doxology is not classical.* If we put a stop at πάντων, the information concerning ὁ Χριστὸς is more complete, and ὁ ὥν is referred to a preceding nominative: but still there is an abrupt introduction of a doxology to a person who had not been mentioned in the preceding clause; and there is a barrenness in the word Θεὸς, which, in this situation, requires to be clothed with an article, ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς. It is further to be added, that the earliest Christian writers who quote this passage appear, by the course of the argument, to understand it as a plain declaration that Christ is God over all, blessed for ever. It is so rendered in the most ancient versions, and the possibility of another interpretation was not suggested till the sixteenth century. If the apostle then did not mean to give these titles to Christ, he employs a form of expres-

* Middleton on the Greek Article, p. 434, Second Edition.

sion in which the natural grammatical construction of the words misled the whole Christian church for fifteen hundred years. If he did mean to give them to Christ, then not only is he called God, but the name has such accompaniments that it must be understood in its most exalted sense. Of him it is said, ὁ ὥν επὶ πάντων Θεός; as it is said of the Father (Ephes. iv. 6), εἰς Θεός καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων. To him is ascribed the title εὐλογητὸς, which is used in the Old Testament as the name of the Most High, and which was employed by the whole congregation of the Jews in their adoration of the God of Israel (1 Chron. xxix. 10), Εὐλογητὸς ει Κύριε Θεός Ἰσραὴλ. We can place no reliance upon the language of Scripture, if there be an inferiority of nature in a being so designated. And the very purport of the expressions here used seems to be, to teach us that every notion which can be conceived to be implied under the name God, belongs to the Son as well as to the Father.

§ 6. The third passage I would mention, in which the name of God is applied to Christ, is John xx. 28. "Thomas answered and said to him, My Lord and my God."—Ο Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. If the term God here be applied to Christ, and in the highest sense, Christ must be God. This it will therefore be necessary to prove.

Three distinct methods have been resorted to, to neutralize the testimony of this passage. It has been said in effect—

First,—that the words were not addressed specifically to any one, and so cannot prove the dignity of the Son. That, in short, they were an exclamation of surprise which broke from Thomas unguardedly, under the influence of the feelings of the moment. I shall say nothing with reference to this gloss. It is useless to argue with

men who will rather convict Thomas of profanity than admit the Divinity of the Saviour.

Secondly.—It has been alleged that the words were a direct address to God the Father, and so do not prove the Divinity of the Son. “The passage,” says Mr. Belsham, “is a sudden exclamation of astonishment and joy; as if he had said, ‘My Lord and my God,’ referring to the Father, ‘how great is thy power!’ or, ‘My Lord, and my God has done this.’” Against this allegation the following objections lie.

1. “Had such been the intention of the words, it is very extraordinary that they should have been left in a state of defect so objectionable and dangerous. Two additional words would have filled up the sentence, and precluded all mistake.”

2. “The connected clauses, ‘Thomas *answered*, and said to him,’ do not agree with this interpretation, but in their proper and manifest construction limit the succeeding words as addressed to Jesus Christ.” *

Thirdly.—It has been contended that the word God, if it must be understood as applied to Christ, is to be taken in the secondary and subordinate sense. “If, then,” says Mr. Belsham, “the words must be taken as an address to Christ, the apostle’s meaning seems to be as if he had said, ‘Convinced of the truth of thy resurrection, I acknowledge thee as my Master, and submit to thee as my God, as a prophet coming with Divine credentials, and supported by Divine authority.’” Such also is the view of Dr. Carpenter. “The words of Thomas,” says Mr. Yates, “are a confession that Jesus was his Lord, and his God. But it is needless to dispute that, when Thomas addressed Jesus as his Lord or Master, and his God, he might mean only that Jesus

* *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., p. 265.

was his inspired instructor in matters of religion." That the Scriptures do use the term God at times in an inferior sense is admitted; but no undoubted instance of this kind can be found at all parallel to this. There is here, to borrow partly the words of an excellent writer, "a weighty brevity, an unhesitating comprehension, an unchecked emphasis," which would irresistibly direct us to take the terms in their full measure of signification,— "MY LORD, AND MY GOD." "Let the serious inquirer further observe, that the combination of the two sacred names forms the strongest representation of Divine Majesty of which the language is capable. Let him also reflect on the word of appropriation, '*My Lord*,' '*My God*;' and duly ponder, whether it does not imply the submission of soul, the dedication of religious feeling, which amount to a real homage of adoration. Let him consider, whether he can think it probable, or rationally possible, that any Egyptian or Israelite could have been led, by the Scripture declarations adverted to, ever to accost Moses, or one of the princes of the people, in any circumstances, with the solemn address, 'My Lord, and my God.' "*

§ 7. The next instance in which the term God is applied to Christ occurs in Heb. i. 8 : Πρὸς δὲ τὸν νιόν, 'Ο θρόνος σου, ὁ Θεός, εἰς τὸν αἰώνα τοῦ αἰώνος. "But unto the Son [he saith], Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." There is no dispute here with respect to the canonical authority of this passage. Our remarks may, therefore, be confined to its proper rendering and interpretation. To deprive us of the testimony of this text in support of the Divinity of Christ, two prominent methods have been adopted by Socinians. Some of them contend

* *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., pp. 269, 270; Fourth Edition, vol. ii., p. 57.

that ὁ Θεὸς does not refer to the Son, but the Father, and consequently that it cannot prove the Divinity of the Son ; while others, conceding that the reference is to Christ, maintain that the word is to be understood in its inferior sense, as signifying that he was a person authorized, commissioned, and inspired to declare the will of God to mankind.

The former maintain that ὁ Θεὸς is to be considered as of the nominative case, and not the vocative, according to our translation ; and accordingly translate the phrase "God is thy throne for ever and ever," *i. e.*, according to their interpretation, the support of thy throne. The pretext for this gloss is, that what according to the ordinary declension of Greek nouns might appear the proper vocative, ὦ Θεὲ, is not used,—but, as we have seen, ὁ Θεὸς. This, however, is a mere pretext. The vocative Θεὲ, as Dr. Smith observes, is of extremely rare occurrence in the New Testament and the Septuagint; its place being almost uniformly supplied by ὁ Θεὸς, according to the idiom of the Attic, the common Greek, and the Alexandrian.* In the Book of Psalms there is only one instance of Θεὲ; though the invocation, O God, occurs in cases almost innumerable. In the New Testament, it only occurs in Matt. xxvii. 46. "There is not therefore," as Dr. Smith states, "the shadow of a reason for preferring the Unitarian construction and rendering on the ground of grammatical propriety." This language is, however, too weak. We may surely add, that we have all but certain evidence that ὁ Θεὸς is the vocative; and if so, Christ is undoubtedly said to be God. This indeed is so manifest, that although the rendering "God is thy throne" is retained in the Improved Version, Dr. Carpenter now admits that the idiom of

* Vol. i., p. 314, Third Edition.

the Greek forbids us thus to translate the passage; and Mr. Yates says the want of a parallel form of expression to “God is thy throne” inclines him to prefer the common translation,—“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” To this, it may be added that Wetstein, whose Socinian propensities are very apparent, admits that ὁ Θεὸς is here the vocative, and that the writer has called Christ by the name of God.

§ 8. The propriety of the common rendering is not, however, merely evinced by the grammatical construction of the passage; it is itself more rational, and agrees more entirely with the scope and design of the chapter where it is found than the conflicting translation.

1. It is more rational. The Socinian rendering of the passage carries in it its own refutation. It supposes a metaphor, where there is nothing to induce a suspicion that the language is figurative; for “God is thy throne” can only be interpreted to mean “God is the support of thy throne.” And the metaphor necessarily implied in it has been justly pronounced harsh, and repugnant to good taste and piety. “God is often denominated a rock, a tower, a fortress, a shield, a refuge. But in all these metaphors there is an obvious superiority in strength and dignity preserved to the Divine Being. The reader immediately associates with these expressions the ideas of power and grandeur in a PROTECTING Being, and of his pre-eminence above the objects protected. But it is the reverse in the case brought before us. A *throne* derives its dignity from the character and dominion of the sovereign who sits upon it. To call the Eternal Majesty *the throne of a creature*” seems little suitable to the “reverence which is ever to be maintained towards Him, and which is one of the most distinguishing characters of the Scripture style.”

2. It agrees with the scope and design of the chapter where it is found, which is to assert and prove the exalted dignity of Him who is the subject of it, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. "Now 'God is thy throne,'" says Dr. Wardlaw, "in the sense attached to the expression" by Socinians, "conveys nothing in the least degree peculiar; for God is the stability of all thrones." He is so of the thrones of the angels, with whom Jesus is in the context compared. How then are we to imagine, that for the express purpose of proving the superiority of Christ to angels, the writer should, with formality and emphasis, mention a circumstance in which there is no peculiarity whatever, but which he might with equal propriety and truth have affirmed of angels, or even of earthly princes, as of Christ?

The second class, conceding that the reference is to Christ, contend that the word God is here to be understood in the inferior sense. Mr. Yates says, "We have only need to read the whole connection to be convinced that this is the case;" and, after introducing it, adds, as if the question were to settle the business, "Can the all-perfect Jehovah be anointed?" We answer, that one of the subsistents of the adorable Trinity, uniting himself with human nature to accomplish the great work of mediation, not only may, but must be anointed, or consecrated to that office; and with reference to the gloss itself, it is obvious that there is nothing but the necessities of a system to be brought forwards in its support. To me, it is inconceivable that that great Being, who is so jealous of his own honour, who will not give his glory unto another, should have addressed the Son in terms so directly adapted to lead to idolatry, if the Son had been a mere man like ourselves.

§ 9. The next instance we mention in which the name God is applied to Christ occurs in 1 John v. 20: *οὗτος ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεός, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ αἰώνιος.* There is no dispute concerning the genuineness of this passage, nor concerning its correct reading; nor is there any difference of rendering proposed by our opponents, but with reference to one word. The preposition *ἐν*, which occurs twice in the whole passage, with only two intervening words, is translated differently in the Improved Version,—“we are *in* (*ἐν*) him that is true, even *in* (*ἐν*) his Son Jesus Christ;” the latter *ἐν* they render *through*. The alteration is altogether unwarranted; but it does not materially affect the arguments on either side. The main point of contention is, whether the demonstrative pronoun, *οὗτος*, refers to the immediate antecedent, “Jesus Christ,” or to the remote one, “him that is true.” The latter is maintained by Socinians; and this is the method adopted by them to neutralize the testimony of this important passage. In support of this latter interpretation, it is stated that the pronoun does not always refer to the nearest antecedent,—a point which is readily conceded. We say, however, in reply, that the ordinary and fair construction of the demonstrative is with the nearest antecedent noun,—a rule from which we are not at liberty to depart without evident necessity; or when the immediate antecedent holds no prominent place in the sentence, but is introduced only incidentally, the remote being obviously the chief subject, having the entire or greatly preponderating emphasis in the mind of the writer. Are our opponents justified, on either of these grounds, in asserting that the reference of *οὗτος* is to “him that is true?” Does the immediate antecedent, “Jesus Christ,” hold a subordinate place in the sentence? On the contrary, he is the first and last in that part of

the verse which precedes the words we are now considering. Is there any necessity for refusing the demonstrative to the remote antecedent? "Yes," says Mr. Yates, with unblushing effrontery, "a person not previously instructed in the doctrines of Trinitarianism would at the first glance perceive this sentiment to be so false and absurd, that he would immediately refer the pronoun to the more remote antecedent, forming an instantaneous judgment that the apostle did not intend to represent Jesus Christ as the true God." This language of Yates deserves the most indignant reprobation. It is manifestly an interpretation of Scripture by previously formed opinions. It either flies in the face of grammar, or it begs the very question in dispute; for there is no alleged necessity for going to the remote antecedent, but the assumed impossibility that Christ can be God.

It has been said, indeed, that since the Father is designated by the epithet "true," in the former part of the verse, it is but reasonable to regard him as intended by the phrase "the true God" in the latter clause. There can be no force in this to the mind of any man, unless he imagines that, because the Father is the true God, Jesus Christ cannot be so also, which is to take for granted the very point in dispute.

The reasons, however, for the application of the clause, "the true God, and eternal life," to Christ, rest not merely upon the grammar of the passage. For—

1. We ask, What reason can be assigned for this assertion, supposing that it refers to the Father? We do not make an affirmation when it is most obviously uncalled for. Such, we think, is the case here, according to the Socinian view of the passage. "Could it," says Dr. Wardlaw, "ever have entered into the imagination

of any reader that in the sentence, ‘we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ,’* the apostle could mean by ‘him that is true’ any one else than the true God? Is it very likely, think you, that after speaking of ‘him that is true’ in a connection where Jesus Christ is represented as his Son, he would feel it necessary to subjoin the explanation, ‘He that is true, *is* the true God?’ There was, however, obvious propriety, not to say necessity, after declaring that the Son of God has brought unto us the knowledge of ‘him that is true,’ in subjoining, ‘This is the true God,’ *i. e.* the Son himself, ‘and eternal life.’”

2. The Being intended by *οὐτός* is described as “the true God, and eternal life.” Now the designation, “the eternal life,” is never given to the Father, but is peculiar and appropriate to the Saviour. And it is especially worthy of notice, that this is the very title by which he is described at the commencement of this epistle, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” “This,” in the words before us, “is the true God, and eternal life.” Is not this, as it has been observed, as if the apostle had said, “This is he of whom I spoke in the commencement of my letter; HE is the life, the eternal life, whom I then mentioned as the grand subject of apostolic testimony?”

* [“—— *in* his Son.” Dr. Wardlaw, adopting the Socinian rendering of the preposition *ἐν* (see beginning of this section), has “*through* his Son,” feeling doubtless, that if there was any weight to be attached to it, his opponents must be defeated on their own ground.—*Socinian Controversy*, Second Edition, p. 59.]

3. The words we are considering are immediately followed by an admonition against idolatry,—“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” “It is very unlikely,” says Dr. Watts, “that the apostle John should conclude his epistle with so solemn a charge against idolatry, or the worshipping of that which is not God, and yet, in the foregoing verses, leave his expression concerning the true God, so easily and so naturally to be interpreted concerning Jesus Christ, if he were not the true God.” No Socinian writer, I will venture to affirm, would have been so incautious: I dare not charge it upon the Spirit of God.

LECTURE IV.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

(CONTINUED.)

The name God applied to the Messiah by Isaiah:—by Paul and Peter:—the name JEHOVAH applied to Christ:—the final instance of, adduced:—applied by Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews:—the Socinian interpretation of this shown to be fallacious:—Prepare the way of JEHOVAH, the cry of the wilderness, a proof of:—JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS:—Dr. Smith's views of:—standing at the judgment-seat of Christ, a proof:—Adonai.

§ 1. THE next instance of the name God being applied to Christ to which we refer is taken from Isaiah vii. 14; ix. 6, 7; in connection with Matt. i. 22, 23. “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” “Now all this was done,” says an infallible commentator upon the language of Old Testament prophecy, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall

bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

I cannot now enter upon the controversy which has been agitated, even amongst evangelical divines, whether these words of the prophet which have been quoted had a primary, but inferior and partial reference to some proximate person and event,—but another, and a designed reference to some remoter circumstance, which, when it occurred, would be the real fulfilment, answering every feature, and filling up the entire extent of the original delineation; or whether they referred to the Messiah exclusively. The declaration of Matthew, writing under the influence of the Spirit of God, "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet," totally forbids the supposition that these words were applied by the evangelist, in an accommodated sense, to Christ; and compel us to believe that he was directly pointed to by the spirit of prophecy, if he was not the only being to whom reference was made.

On these passages I observe, that all who will read from the commencement of the seventh chapter, to the seventh verse of the ninth chapter, must perceive that the child named Immanuel, in the seventh chapter, is the same with the child born, and son given, whose name in chapter ix. is called "The mighty God;" so that the two designations, "Immanuel" and "Mighty God," mutually illustrate and confirm each other.

Mr. Yates seems very reluctant to admit that the title "Mighty God" is applied to Christ. The word *Al*, translated "God," may be a corruption of the text, or possibly it should be rendered "Ruler," he intimates; but suspicious, as it would seem, that this ground is untenable, he adds, that "our firm belief of the sole

supreme Divinity of the Father, and the subordination of Jesus Christ, ought not to be shaken by the evidence of a passage which is allowed to be attended with many difficulties, and in which, at the very utmost, the application of the title ‘Mighty God’ to Jesus of Nazareth would only prove him to be a person unto whom the word of God came.” This is surely most extraordinary language. What does it amount to? Why, that our firm belief of the subordination of the Son ought not to be shaken by a text which goes directly to subvert it. We know nothing of the person of the Son but from the Scriptures; and the passage to which we are now referring is one amongst others which are to guide our opinion: but no, according to Mr. Yates, it ought to have no influence. We have a firm belief on the subject, which it should not be allowed to overthrow. We answer, that firm belief is a wrong belief: it is not regulated by the Scriptures, or this text would have influence in altering and modifying it; for the compound appellation, גִבֹּר אֵל [Gibbor Al], “The mighty God,” is never applied to a human being; and the whole of the magnificent description of the Christ, of which this appellation forms a part, is as clear and decided a proof of the Saviour’s incarnation, his essential dignity, and his mediatorial kingdom and glory, as language can supply. The fact is, that Mr. Yates has dipped not the cloth, but the pattern.

§ 2. The last instances of the name God being applied to Christ to which we refer are the following:—Ephes. v. 5; 2 Peter i. 1; Titus ii. 13. “The kingdom of Christ and of God.” “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” “Looking for that

blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The proof derived from these passages depends upon the same principle; and therefore I have classed them together. It has been satisfactorily established by Dr. Royaards (a German Professor), by Granville Sharp, Middleton, and Wordsworth, that where the designations God and Christ occur, united by the copulative conjunction, if the article is prefixed to the first, and not repeated before the second, they must be referred to one and the same person. This is the case in the passages we are now referring to. They ought, accordingly, to be rendered,—"the kingdom of the Christ and God,"—"through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,"—"the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Mr. Yates admits that the above passages *may* be thus rendered; but though he expresses his opinion that the common translation of them is preferable, it is observable that he does not produce a single text in which the construction with regard to the article is the same as in the above passages, while they contain, notwithstanding, a clear and marked distinction between God and our Lord Jesus Christ. We may surely conclude, therefore, that he found it impossible. Middleton, indeed, assures us that the rule with reference to the article, of which we are now speaking, is uniformly observed by the Greek interpreters, and by the sacred writers. "It is idle," he adds, "to tell us that a certain canon is applicable to other Greek writings, but not to these, without attempting to prove so remarkable a difference by a single example. Whatever may be thought of the Fathers in some respects, it may surely be presumed that they knew the use of one

of the commonest forms of expression in their native tongue."

§ 3. SECOND PROOF.—The name Jehovah is applied in the Scriptures to Christ.

"JEHOVAH," says Dr. Wardlaw, "is the incommunicable name of the Supreme God; signifying his eternal, independent, and immutable existence. He appropriates it to himself, calling it 'MY NAME, JEHOVAH;' and the writer of the eighty-third Psalm concludes with these words,—'That men may know that thou, WHOSE NAME ALONE IS JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.' If this name, therefore, is directly given in the Scriptures to the Messiah, to Jesus of Nazareth, the question concerning his supreme Deity ought to be decided." * This, indeed, is admitted by Socinians. We are accordingly relieved from the necessity, laid upon us in the former case, of proving that the name, if used at all, is not used in an inferior sense; for in such a sense it cannot be used. If Christ be called Jehovah, or if by necessary inference the name applies to him, our point is proved.

§ 4. The first instance to which we refer is Isaiah vi. 1–3: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Jehovah of hosts" (verse 5). Of whom speaketh the prophet this? The following is the short and resistless chain of argument by which the

* *Socinian Controversy*, p. 77, Second Edition.

reference to the Lord Jesus Christ is proved beyond the reach of doubt. In the eighth verse, the prophet tells us that he “ heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I ; send me.” “ And he said,” it is added in the ninth verse,—*i. e.* Jehovah said, “ Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed” (verses 9, 10). Now the evangelist John, having quoted these words as remarkably verified by the conduct of the Jews in rejecting Christ, adds, “ These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him” (chap. xii. 41). I cannot well conceive of a more decided and direct proof of the Deity of Christ than this. The quotation of the words of Isaiah fixes the time of the vision ; the glorious being seen was Jehovah of hosts: the evangelist John declares that the glory of the being beheld was the glory of Christ. Can any conclusion be more undoubted, that Christ is Jehovah of hosts? and if he be called Jehovah, his supreme Deity is undoubted.

Mr. Yates and the editors of the Improved Version endeavour to elude the force of this argument, by suggesting that “ saw” may mean “ foresaw;” and that the glory to which the evangelist refers was the future glory of Christ displayed in the performance of miracles. We answer—

That nothing can be more arbitrary and unnatural than this gloss. Isaiah is represented as having seen, on a particular occasion, a particular manifestation of glory—the glory of the Lord of hosts. The evangelist,

referring to this time, says that he then saw the glory of Christ; so that Christ must be Jehovah of hosts. "No," says Mr. Yates; "the glory to which the evangelist refers, and which he says that Isaiah saw, was not the glory which Isaiah describes as having been seen by him, but something entirely different,"—and something too, it is remarkable, of which there is no mention whatever made in the whole of the vision there recorded. "He contemplated," says Mr. Yates, "the future glory of Christ displayed in the performance of miracles." This is the glory which it seems he saw, *i.e.* foresaw. Yet of this glory no notice is taken by the prophet,—not even a word is said about it. You may judge of Socinian candour by the following language of Mr. Yates. "How," says he, "have the Trinitarians contrived to deduce an argument for the Divinity of Jesus from this plain declaration? Upon looking to the chapter from which the latter of the two prophecies is quoted, they discover that at the same time when Isaiah was inspired with the foreknowledge of the rejection of our Saviour's miracles, he, in vision, saw Jehovah of hosts, and heard the seraphim crying, 'The whole earth is full of his glory.' *Although these coincidences are certainly a little remarkable,* they afford not the shadow of proof that Jesus is Jehovah." To such a mind no evidence would be availing.

§ 5. The second instance to which we refer of the application of the name Jehovah to Christ is Heb. i. 10: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth." *Kύριος*, rendered "Lord" here, is the word by which the name Jehovah is invariably expressed by the Septuagint translators of the Old Testament. In such passages therefore as are quoted from the Old into the New, we are entitled to understand and

interpret it—*i. e.* Κύριος—as equivalent to Jehovah, as in the present instance. It is granted indeed by Mr. Yates, and other Socinian writers, that in the case before us it should be so considered. The only question then is, Does the word Lord here, equivalent as it is admitted to be to Jehovah, refer to Christ? One would think, at the first view of the passage, that of this it would be difficult or impossible to doubt. The verse in which it stands forms part of a statement designed to exhibit the superiority of Christ to angels. It contains a quotation from the Old Testament calculated to evince this superiority. It is connected by the conjunction, *and*, with another quotation contained in the two previous verses: a circumstance which ought to satisfy us that both quotations refer to the same person; while that person is expressly said to be the Son. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” “And thou, Lord,” he adds in the tenth verse,—*i. e.* unto the Son he says again, “And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth.”

Notwithstanding this clear and conclusive evidence, the application of the term Lord to Christ is denied; it is maintained by Socinians to refer to the Father. The only reason assigned by Mr. Yates is, that πρός, the preposition rendered “unto the Son,” in the eighth verse, should have been “concerning the Son,” as it must be rendered in the seventh verse, “but concerning the angels he saith,” &c.; and therefore, reasons Mr. Yates, the words are not an address to the Son,—and *ergo*, I presume he means the word “Lord” (tenth verse) refers, or may refer, to the Father. Upon this I observe—

§ 6. FIRST,—that the orthodox view of the passage, that the whole connection is an address to the Son, is not affected in the slightest degree by the rendering of the

preposition *πρός*. Without conceding to Mr. Yates that it should be rendered “concerning”—“concerning the Son,” I am willing to join issue with him, allowing his translation to stand; for I contend even in that case the passage is an address to the Son, and cannot be considered in any other light. “Concerning the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” The translation of the preposition cannot alter the nature of the thing. “To” or “concerning” makes no difference; it is still an address; nothing else can be made of it. It is an address to the Son also. And so the second quotation, in the tenth verse, is an address too. “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.” And if the first quotation is an address to the Son, so must the second be. It is most unnatural—it is contrary to all just rules of interpreting Scripture—to suppose, that in a continuous address, or an address made up of different quotations, as here, a change should be made, without the slightest warning in the object of address; and especially such a change as is supposed here, *i.e.* both of the speaker and the being spoken to: for according to the Socinian interpretation, though it is the Father who addresses the Son in the first part of the quotation, it is not the Father who addresses the Son in the last part: the Father is not the speaker at all, unless they suppose he addresses himself; for he becomes now the object of address,—he must be addressed, according to their views, by a creature. Such is the utter confusion produced by their arbitrary interpretation. The eternal Father is the speaker in the first part of the quotation, and addresses the Son; and then, without the least warning of change, we are to suppose that a creature addresses the eternal Father! Who can believe it?

SECONDLY.—I observe the Socinian interpretation does not comport with the context. The design of the whole chapter is to confirm the Hebrews in the faith of the gospel, by exhibiting the unrivalled glories of Christ. The law was ordained by angels. Christ is affirmed to be superior to them. He has a more excellent name than they. He maketh his angels [as] winds, and [as] a flaming fire, his ministers or servants to execute his pleasure. The Son is not a servant, he is a Sovereign,—he has a throne, which is for ever and ever,—he has a right to that throne, as the apostle shows in the tenth and following verses, because he is the Creator of all things, and so has a right to govern them. God, on the other hand, has not exalted angels to a throne,—they are ministering spirits, &c. Thus the orthodox interpretation of the tenth verse is in perfect harmony with the context. But if we suppose, with the Socinians, that the tenth verse is an address to the Father, how can it contribute to show the superiority of Christ to angels, when it says nothing about him? This is a puzzling question; but it is difficult to nonplus Socinian ingenuity. They attempt to get out of the difficulty by supposing that the immutability of God is here declared as a pledge of the immutability of the kingdom of Christ. This however, says an excellent writer, is bringing out of the passage what is not in it. The supposition of this pledge is entirely gratuitous. The words contain nothing to lead us to suppose there is in them any reference to the government of Christ. They contain a simple declaration concerning the being who is designated as Jehovah, of his power in the creation of heaven and earth, of his immutability and eternal existence.

I will only add concerning this passage, that if, understanding the tenth verse as an address to the Father, we are at liberty to suppose, that in a declaration that he

created the heavens and the earth, that he is immutable and everlasting, there is contained a pledge of the immutability of the kingdom of Christ, I know nothing which can forbid us to suppose any one thing from any part of the word of God.

§ 7. The next instance to which we refer of the application of the name Jehovah to Christ is Isaiah xl. 3 : “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” These words were fulfilled when John the Baptist appeared ; for when asked by the messengers of the Sanhedrim, “Who art thou ?” he replied, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.” (John i. 23.) And if possible, in still more decided terms, Matthew, speaking of John the Baptist, says (chap. iii. 3),—“This is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Now whose way was John sent to prepare ? Whom was he commissioned to introduce ? “I am not the Christ,” said he, “but I am sent before him” (chap. iii. 28). “That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water” (chap. i. 31). Is there room for a doubt that Jesus is that Jehovah whose way the messenger was to prepare ?

The next instance, and one in entire harmony with the last, is Luke i. 16, 17 : “And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before *him*, in the spirit and power of Elias, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” It is justly observed by Dr. Wardlaw here, that the pronoun *him*, in the seventeenth verse, has for its only antecedent “the Lord their God,” in the end of the sixteenth.

Christ, therefore, must be Jehovah; for it was before him that John went. The Socinians, indeed, pretend that by *him* we are to understand Christ; and in the text of the Socinian version we actually read, “He shall go before Christ, in the sight of the Lord God.” It is true they print the words “Christ” and “of the Lord God” in a different type, as if they meant to intimate that there is nothing to answer them in the Greek; in which case their translation of the plain, unambiguous phrase, *αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἡλίου*, would be, “*He shall go before in the sight, with the spirit and power of Elijah.*” “It is difficult,” as Dr. Smith has observed, with just indignation, “to believe that any principle, but a dishonest subserviency to hypothesis, could have dictated such a translation.” They dare not by the mode of printing appear to make Christ a translation of *αὐτοῦ*; and yet, if they did not intend this, they have given it no translation. The translation, or commentary, or whatever you call it, was evidently dictated by the desire of getting rid of the argument, that *αὐτοῦ* refers to the antecedent “the Lord their God,”—an argument which proves that Christ is this Lord God, to the destruction of their system. The principle of the argument in both of our two last instances of the application of the name Jehovah to Christ is, that if it is said in the New Testament that Jesus Christ is the person mentioned in a particular passage of Old Testament Scripture, the name used in that passage belongs to him.

The method adopted by Mr. Belsham, and the generality of Socinians, to evade the argument of the last passage, is the following. “John,” say they, “was the forerunner of Jehovah, who came at the commencement of the gospel dispensation to assume his righteous and

benignant empire over men—by being the forerunner of Jesus, the great messenger of God to mankind.” They mean, I imagine, that Jesus was the representative of Jehovah; so that John might be said to be the forerunner of Jehovah. Dr. Pye Smith pronounces this explanation, or rather gloss, to be “ destitute of proof, and contrary to the fair and legitimate use of language.” “The question ought to be,” continues the Doctor, “which sense agrees most exactly with the language and the scope of the original prophecy. The language is abundantly plain and unambiguous. No terms could more clearly convey that the being, whose coming is announced with such a magnificence of joy, is Jehovah in his own special presence, and not by a mere representative. If the scope of the passages be considered, it will appear no slight incongruity that, after all the solemnity and splendour of the personage thus introduced, he should turn out to be not the Sovereign promised, but only the fellow-servant of the herald.” Mr. Yates, with the practised boldness and freedom of a thorough-paced Socinian, says the passage in John, which asserts that John was sent before Christ, probably signified only that John began to preach before Christ.

§ 8. The next passage to which we refer is Jer. xxiii. 5, 6: “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called”—or, as Dr. Smith renders the passage, more closely and literally as I imagine, “which they shall call him, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” A parallel passage occurs in the thirty-third chapter, verse 16. The passage concludes there, according to the common

rendering, “And this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness;” translated, however, thus by Dr. Smith, “And this is he who shall call to her, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” “It is generally agreed,” says Dr. Guyse,* “that the ordinary version is a very odd translation of this text, which ought to be rendered, ‘*He who shall call her is Jehovah our Righteousness.*’ And so ‘the Lord’ or ‘Jehovah our Righteousness’ is descriptive of Christ by that name, which it was said in the twenty-third chapter he should be called by.” The words are וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְדָקָתְךָ; and there can be no doubt, I should think, of the exact correctness of the rendering proposed by Dr. Pye Smith. The attempts which have been made to translate both passages, so as to show that the Messiah is not the object to which the name Jehovah is given, are, I think, justly pronounced by Dr. Smith to be “unnatural constructions contrived and forced upon the words, for the mere purpose of evasion.” Mr. Yates proposes, as a more exact rendering of the close of the sixteenth verse, thirty-third chapter, “And this is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah is our prosperity.” He says that he proposed “prosperity” as a more exact rendering of צְדָקָתְךָ than “righteousness,” because he was aware of the impossibility of finding any English word corresponding to it. Bishop Lowth, he tells us, was pressed by the same difficulty. “The word,” says the latter, as quoted by Yates, “is used in such a great latitude of signification, for justice, truth, faithfulness, goodness, mercy, deliverance, salvation, that it is not easy sometimes to give the precise meaning of it without much circumlocution.” Mr. Yates has kindly added to this latitude of signification, by giving it a meaning which, I believe, it

* Vide *Sermons on Divinity of Christ*, Sermon III.

never bears. I have no doubt that the bearing of this important passage upon the doctrine of justification by faith is the real secret of this absurd and unprincipled rendering. This, however, is a slight digression.

The only plausible objection to the argument in support of the Divinity of Christ derived from this passage is rather darkly hinted at by Yates, and more clearly stated by other Socinian authors. According to them, the title "*Jehovah our Righteousness*" is indeed given to the Messiah, but only as a descriptive name, not as a personal appellative intended to declare the blessings which Jehovah would confer under the reign, and by the instrumentality of the Messiah. Of such descriptive names these are examples: an altar was called by Jacob, *El Elohe Israel*, "God, the God of Israel;" another, by Moses, *Jehovah nissi*, "Jehovah my banner;" and the name of the predicted city in Ezekiel is *Jehovah sham-mah*, "Jehovah is there." (Gen. xxxiii. 20; Exod. xvii. 15; Ezek. xlvi. 35.)

§ 9. I give you the judicious remarks of Dr. Smith upon this subject. "The fact is unquestionable, that the gratitude or hope of individuals, in the ancient scriptural times, was often expressed by the imposition of significant appellations on persons or other objects, in the composition of which Divine names and titles were frequently employed: these are therefore nothing but short sentences declarative of some blessing possessed or expected. When such names were given, the nature of the subject indubitably suggested the sense intended. It was impossible for a structure of earth or of stones, or a merely human being, ever to be mistaken for the Deity: the known nature of the subject precluded misapprehension." The Doctor goes on to state, that if we had indubitable proofs that Christ was a

mere human being, this appellation would be merely a descriptive proposition, and would be properly read with the supplement of the substantive verb, “Jehovah is our righteousness;” but that if it be demonstrated from other sources that Christ was a Divine person, it would then be a personal appellative descriptive of his person and grace, “JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

The Doctor proceeds to say, that “there is enough in the passage itself to induce us to decide in favour of the latter supposition.” He derives it from the word Righteousness. The blessing denoted by this word is “the capital blessing of the gospel; it is constantly and most definitely ascribed to Jesus Christ. Every other righteousness is disowned and rejected in comparison of His. He is the end, scope, and design of the law for righteousness. In the most emphatic sense, he is the Righteousness of his people.” *

“Here then,” adds the Doctor, “in the harmony and unison of revelation, in the correspondence between the prophecies which foretold the gospel, and the doctrines which were its completion, we find a fact of weight enough to turn the scale, and determine the reference to the *person* of the Divine Redeemer,—that this is his name which they shall call him, ‘THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ ” *

§ 10. The last passage to which I refer is Rom. xiv. 10, 11: “For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to *me*, and every tongue shall confess to God.” It is unquestionable that the

* [Scripture Testimony, vol. i., pp. 404–408, Third Edition; vol. i., 270–273, Fourth Edition. The phraseology of the text does not *verbally* correspond with either of the above editions. The Editor presumes that the extracts are correctly made from a previous edition.]

speaker in Isaiah is Jehovah. Now, unless Christ be Jehovah, how can these words be a proof that we must stand at *his* judgment-seat? “The whole force of the apostle’s argument,” says Dr. Guyse, “stands on this, that it was the Son, inclusively at least, who swore by himself, or ‘As I live, every knee shall bow to me.’ For if we suppose it to be the Father, exclusive of the Son, who said ‘I swear by myself,’ this would have been so far from proving, as the apostle intends and argues, that we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that it would have proved just the contrary; because Christ is not that God that there swear by himself, and consequently not that God whom by that oath we are obliged to stand before, and bow the knee, and confess to. But if Christ is that God which there swear that every knee should bow, and every tongue confess to him, then the proof is cogent and unanswerable that we shall all stand before his judgment-seat.” I cannot well conceive, I acknowledge, proof more conclusive than this.

There are many other passages in the Old Testament Scriptures in which the name Jehovah is given to the Messiah, besides those which have been mentioned. It is a just remark of Dr. Wardlaw, that if the evidence adduced on this particular (referring to what he himself had adduced) be sufficient to ascertain the fact, that the name Jehovah is given in the Scriptures to Jesus Christ, a principle of interpretation will thus be established, which will at once produce, and justify the application to our adorable Redeemer of a variety of other passages, which might possibly indeed be interpreted otherwise, but which find in this principle a more natural and easy explanation.

§ 11. We have said nothing of the proper title *Adonai* (Lord), because it does not by itself prove the

Divinity of Christ. It is used, however, in one instance in a manner so remarkable as to deserve notice. "What think ye of Christ?" said our Lord to the Pharisees, "whose son is he?" They replied, "The son of David." "How then," returned the Saviour, "doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" It is added, "No man was able to answer him a word." Mr. Yates, in remarking upon Dr. Wardlaw's volume, seems to have been in a similar difficulty; for he passes over this text *sub silentio*. He must either have *felt* it too much, or thought it *too little*. The Pharisees of old were in the former predicament. "It must ever confound, and *ought* to silence," says Dr. Wardlaw, "all those who deny that Jesus possessed any nature superior to that which he derived by his descent from David, or any existence previous to the time when, by his birth into the world, he became David's son. The only simple and satisfactory answer to the question is to be found in the distinction of natures, for which we contend. Being Immanuel, he was at once the root and the offspring of David, David's Son and David's Lord." If these passages do not prove that Christ is God, they show that the Bible is calculated to confound, perplex, and deceive us!

LECTURE V.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

(CONTINUED.)

Second class of direct proofs of—the ascription of DIVINE PERFECTIONS to Christ:—eternal existence:—the declaration, “I am Alpha and Omega:”—the Sovereign in Israel whose comings forth are from eternity:—Christ “before all things:”—OMNIPOTENCE ascribed to Christ:—“the Almighty,” Rev. i. 8.

DIVINE PERFECTIONS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST.

§ 1. *Our second class of proofs is derived from the ascription of Divine Perfections to him.* The following we intend to specify,—ETERNAL EXISTENCE, OMNIPOTENCE, OMNISCIENCE, OMNIPRESENCE.

FIRST.—*Eternal Existence* is ascribed to Christ. If this assertion can be proved, it necessarily follows that Christ is God. To say of any being that he has existed from eternity is only another mode of saying that he is self-existent,—that is, that he is not a creature, that he is God.

§ 2. The first proof of the eternal existence of Christ is derived from John viii. 58: “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

The first remark I make upon these words is, that

the context and tenor of the discussion absolutely require us to understand these words as referring to the existence of Christ. This observation is pointed against the generally received Socinian exposition of the passage; viz., that Jesus is here said to have existed as Messiah, not actually, but in the purpose of God, before Abraham was born,—“Before Abraham was, I am he,” *i. e.* the Christ, *i. e.* was designated to that office. They seem to justify this rendering and interpretation, by the circumstance that the words *ἐγώ εἰμι* are and must be so translated and understood in the twenty-fourth and twenty-eighth verses of this very chapter: “If ye believe not that I am he (the Christ), ye shall die in your sins.” “When the Son of man is lifted up, then shall ye know that I am he.” But this interpretation of the passage is at utter variance with the context and tenor of discussion. “The objection,” says an able critic, “turned upon existence; therefore the reply must refer to existence also. The objection was, ‘Thou canst not have seen Abraham, for thou art not yet fifty years old; thou wast not then born.’ Jesus answered, ‘I was before he was.’ Thus the reply corresponds with the objection.”* But see how the Socinian version accords with it, or rather behold its utter variance! “Thou canst not have seen Abraham,” said the opposers, “for thou art not yet fifty years old.” To this our Lord’s reply in the mouth of a Socinian is, “Before Abraham was born, I was constituted the Messiah.” Judge you whether this would be reasoning or egregious trifling. I again say, then, that the tenor of the discussion absolutely requires us to understand these words as referring to the existence of Christ—as intending to affirm, and as actually affirming, that he had an existence previous to the birth of Abraham.

* Rosenmüller.

Secondly.—I observe that the words themselves sufficiently intimate that that existence has been from eternity. It is so undeniable, that our Lord intended to affirm that he existed before Abraham, that many who deny his Divinity admit this; but they do not allow that the words prove his eternal existence. “The truth of Mr. Wardlaw’s observation,” says Mr. Yates, “that our Lord affirms that he existed before Abraham, will be admitted probably by all Unitarians, who believe in the pre-existence of Christ. But the attribute in question,” he adds, “is his eternal existence.” And this he thinks it does not prove. We answer, that from the terms employed by our Lord, ἐγώ εἰμι, “I am,” (for though he conversed with the Jews in their own tongue, he must have said what is equivalent with ἐγώ εἰμι,) not ἐγώ ἦν, which the case would seem to have required, we are warranted to understand him as intending to affirm his absolute and eternal existence. “My existence,” as though he had said, “includes time past, present, and to come; it is an eternal *Now*: I am; and therefore I must have been before Abraham.” The Socinian interpretation, “I am he,” *i. e.* the Christ, being rejected, there seems to be no other reason than the one just stated for the employment of the present tense. Many excellent writers suppose, that in using the expression “I am,” our Lord intended a reference to the Divine appellation announced to Moses: “I am that I am.” (Exod. iii. 14.) I am not satisfied, for the reasons stated by Dr. Smith, that there is such a reference; nor, indeed, that the words in Exodus are to be considered as an appellative at all. But to maintain our opinion, that the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι is intended to teach the eternal existence of Christ, there is no necessity to suppose any such reference. The word εἰμι often expresses simple existence. The Septuagint writers frequently use the phrase

to denote the simple existence or eternal existence of the Deity, as Exod. iii. 14: ‘Ο ὁν, “the existing one.”’ Jer. xiv. 13: ‘Ο ὁν Κύριε, “O Lord, the existing one,” where it stands as a translation of Jehovah.* To these instances may be added one or two from the New Testament, as Heb. xi. 6: “He that cometh unto God must believe that he existeth,” ὅτι ἔστι. And the very memorable description of the Deity, which is repeated five times in the Apocalypse, ὁ ὁν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, “He who is, and who was, and who is to come.” The grammatical propriety of ἐγώ εἰμι as a phrase to denote the absolute or eternal existence of the Saviour is thus put beyond all question; and such I imagine was the sense our Lord intended to convey. Dr. Pye Smith supposes, without any shadow of reason that I can perceive, that the present “I am” is to be taken in the sense of the past “I was.” I do not say, that it may not be so understood and rendered; but if our Lord meant “I was,” why did he not say ἐγώ ἦν? Why should we depart without necessity from the grammatical rendering, when that rendering conveys an important meaning—a meaning in harmony with other uses of the phrase, and directly in unison with the context and the tenor of the discussion?†

* *Vide also Psalm xxxvii. 36; Job vii. 8.*

† [*Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., p. 162, Third Edition; vol. i., pp. 505, 506, Fourth Edition. The following is the statement of Dr. Pye Smith, in full. “The present, *I am*, may be taken in the sense of the past, *I was*. This is not unusual in the Greek idiom, especially when the action or state of the verb is understood as *continued to the present time*. This renders the construction plain and the sense evident,—‘*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was brought into existence, I was.*’ But there seems to be little reason for debate about the tense of the verb, when it is considered that Jesus, speaking in the dialect of his country, used most probably no verb at all. The idiom of the Hebraic languages would have required ‘*I HE*,’ as it occurs in several passages of the Old Testament, which

Thirdly.—I observe that the correctness of the view we have taken of the meaning of our Lord's words is evinced by the subsequent conduct and language both of the Jews and of Christ. For saying *πρὶν Αβραὰμ γενέσθαι, ἐγώ εἰμι*, the Jews took up stones to cast at him. And why? Evidently because they considered him guilty of blasphemy; as in a case recorded in the tenth chapter, where the Jews are reported to have said, “For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”* Now how must they have understood his language, to consider him guilty of blasphemy? Not as merely affirming that he was the Messiah; for there was no blasphemy in that. Nor as only asserting his pre-existence as a creature; for neither was there any blasphemy in that. They must have interpreted his language to imply his equality with God, or as affirming his eternal existence, as they did in the instance to which reference was made a short time ago. And lest any one should say, they possibly misconceived the meaning of Christ, so that we must not rest our confidence in his Divinity upon the opinions they formed; we answer—*First*, that they were well able to judge of the meaning of the Saviour's language, accompanied as it probably was by looks, and tones, and gestures, adapted to fix and render definite its signification; and *Secondly*, that we build our main argument, not on the conceptions of the Jews, but on the conduct of our Lord. The Jews considered him guilty of blasphemy, as on the occasion referred to in the tenth chapter, because that, being

contain peculiar and most solemn declarations of the supremacy and eternity of JEHOVAH.” In a note, the Doctor quotes, among several other passages, Deut. xxxii. 39, in which the phrase **אֶنְנִי דָּנַי**, “I He,” is translated by the LXX., *ἐγώ εἰμι—I am.*]

* John x. 31–33.

a man only, he made himself equal with God. How is it, then, that our Lord did not attempt to undeceive them, if in reality the conception they had formed of his meaning was a mistaken one? How came the holy Jesus to permit them to labour under a mistake so gross, and so utterly revolting, as it must have been, to his heart? With a Socinian interpreter at his elbow, he would have silenced them at once: under his promptings, he would have said, "I meant only that I am the Messiah." Jesus, however, did not say this. He permitted them to think that he had affirmed his equality with God! Considering these circumstances, I apprehend there can be no doubt that they were right in their interpretation of his words, although wrong in accounting them blasphemous.

§ 3. The second passage to which we refer is Rev. i. 8: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Socinians tell us that these words are attributed to the Father, or Supreme God, and so cannot prove anything respecting Jesus Christ. They seem to ground this assertion, first, on the uniformity of this expression with that which occurs in the fourth verse, where the words, it must be admitted, are used with a direct reference to the Father; and secondly, on the circumstance that the reading of the eighth verse adopted by Griesbach is "saith the Lord God," the word God being added to the common version. "This emendation," says Mr. Yates, "is of considerable importance, because it determines completely the reference of the passage to God, and not to Jesus Christ."

To this it has been replied, that it is a mere begging of the question. Dr. Wardlaw seems to think so; for if Jesus Christ be the Supreme God, the words were in

fact spoken by him. This however is not, I think, fair reasoning. Doubtless, if Christ be the Supreme God, the words were spoken by him; but if we produce them in proof of his Divinity, we are bound to show that they were spoken by him. If it be the case that they refer to the Father, candour and justice should compel us to admit that they afford no independent proof of the Divinity of the Son: we must show from other passages that Christ and the Father are one, before we can be warranted in applying the words of the eighth verse to the former; *i. e.* they must be thrown out of our inquiry in an attempt to ascertain the Scripture doctrine concerning the person of the Son. Upon the statements of the Socinians then, I observe—

First,—that we have good reason to conclude that they are the words of Jesus Christ. Let it be observed, then, that the circumstance of its being said in the fourth verse of the Father, “That he is, and was, and is to come,” is by no means conclusive of the point that the language of the eighth verse is not the language of Christ. Our inquiry is, whether Christ is equal with the Father; if he be so, he may say with as much propriety and truth as the Father, “I am Alpha and Omega, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” It is too much, then, for a Socinian to tell us, that because they are true of the Father, they cannot be spoken by Christ: that is a most manifest begging of the question. And as the words may have been spoken by Christ, the context gives us good reason to think they were so. They are introduced indeed abruptly; but the immediate antecedent is Jesus Christ. “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so,

Amen." Immediately follow the words we are considering,—“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.” It is more natural then to suppose that Jesus Christ is the speaker. I do not think this would ever have been doubted, had it not been for the language the speaker is represented as uttering. That language is fatal to the Socinian scheme; and therefore its adherents conclude it cannot have been spoken by him. This is, however, plainly to explain Scripture by previous system.

In support of our opinion that Christ is the speaker, it is further to be urged, that he is unquestionably so in the immediately almost subjoining verse, and throughout the chapter; and that the language employed, as we shall see presently, bears to the eighth verse the strongest features of resemblance. “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending,” says some one in the eighth verse. “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,” says some one in the eleventh verse.* Is it at all likely that this is another individual? that two different speakers, as the Socinian hypothesis supposes, should be introduced by the inspired writer, so near to each other, uttering almost precisely the same terms? This leads me to observe—

Secondly,—upon the statements of the Unitarians, that if we were to give up the application of the eighth verse to Christ, the titles which he applies to himself, in those passages in which he is the undoubted speaker, prove beyond all controversy his eternal existence, and consequently his Divinity. Griesbach rejects the words, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,” from the eleventh verse; but they are found in the twenty-second chapter, verse 13: while in the eighteenth verse

* This verse is rejected by Griesbach: but compare chap. i. 17; ii. 8; and xxii. 13.

of this very chapter there is a description of Christ, which approximates very nearly to the last part of the description contained in the eighth verse,—“I am,” said Christ, “he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore;” or rather, as the whole passage should be rendered, connecting the latter part of the seventeenth with it, “I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead,” &c.; for the words are, ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, καὶ ὁ ζῶν, καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρός, &c. If these words are not perfectly equivalent with the last of the attributives contained in the eighth verse, they are entirely so with the description which Jehovah gives of himself by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah: “Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (chap. xliv. 6). And again: “Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last” (xlviii. 12). Now if these words denote the eternity of Jehovah, the equivalent, or rather the identical language of the seventeenth and eighteenth verses of this chapter, must prove the eternity and consequent Divinity of Christ. There is no escaping this conclusion; and therefore Mr. Yates sets himself to show, that when Jehovah is said to be “the first and the last,” the words do not denote his eternity, but merely declare that his providence comprehends the past, the present, and the future. “From whence it follows,” he says, “that when Christ calls himself the ‘Alpha and Omega,’ the expression does not express self-existence, but solely that the Christian dispensation was begun, and will be completed by Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith.”* It is manifest, however, that in the passages

referred to in Isaiah, Jehovah applies the epithets to himself, in distinguishing himself from the false gods of the heathen; and they are evidently intended to describe him as, in opposition to these vanities, the living and eternal God. Besides, our argument is not merely built upon the epithets "first and last:" we have a third, ὁ ζῶν, "the living one;" an expression which plainly denotes his eternal and immutable existence—that he is the Being who hath immortality. And here I cannot but observe upon the unfairness of the Socinian editors, who have had—I had almost said—the dishonesty to render the words, ὁ ζῶν, "he that LIVED;" and that notwithstanding the same participle occurs again in the same verse, in connection with the substantive verb, so that it cannot there be similarly rendered, and is in fact rendered "I live—I live for evermore." If therefore we were obliged to admit, which we are very far from doing, that the speaker in the eighth verse is the Father, there would still remain sufficient in his undoubted language to prove his eternity and consequent Divinity.

§ 4. A third passage generally referred to in proof of the eternal existence of Christ occurs in Micah v. 2: "*And thou, Bethlehem of Ephratah, [too] little to be among the clans of Judah: [yet] from thee shall [one] come forth in my presence, to be sovereign in Israel; even he whose coming forth are from eternity, from the days of the everlasting period.*"* It has been justly observed by Dr. Smith, that "the combination of the two terms, translated 'eternity' and 'the everlasting period,' furnishes the strongest expression for an infinite duration of which the Hebrew language is capable." From this "eternity" the "comings forth" of Christ—or his "goings forth," as

* Dr. Pye Smith's Version.

it is in our version—are said to have been. The expression is thought by some to denote the eternal generation of Christ; and so to prove his eternal existence. We have rejected that opinion, and explained the expressions “his goings” or “comings forth” as intending the purposes of the Lord Jesus with respect to the redemption of his people. If this interpretation be correct, the passage proves the eternity of Christ; if his purposes have been “from everlasting,” so must his existence. There is, however, an objection by Yates, which it would appear as if Dr. Wardlaw had felt to be insuperable, as he makes no reply to it. “In the original,” says Mr. Yates, “the same word is used to denote his ‘coming forth’ in the former part of the verse, and his ‘going forth’ in the latter. It ought, doubtless, to be understood in both instances according to the same sense. In the former case, it is commonly understood to signify the birth of the Messiah. ‘Out of thee shall he be born unto me, who is to be a ruler in Israel.’ The last clause must therefore be understood thus: ‘Whose birth has been of old, from everlasting,—that is, ‘Whose birth has been determined, or appointed, from everlasting.’”* The force of this objection depends entirely, in my judgment, upon the proper meaning of the words, “whose goings forth,” or “comings forth.” If they are to be understood of the birth of Christ, and not, as we formerly stated, of his purposes with respect to the redemption of his people, Mr. Yates’s interpretation of the whole clause may stand, and the argument from this passage in support of the eternity of Christ must be given up. Dr. Smith speaks with unusual confidence in the validity of this argument. I think, however, his statements do not

* Page 202.

touch the objection of which we are now speaking; and, upon the whole, there appears to me so much reason in Yates's statement, that the same word ought to be understood in the same sense, that I am not disposed to give prominence to this passage.

§ 5. A fourth passage produced in support of the eternal existence of Christ occurs in Col. i. 17: “And he is ($\pi\rho\circ\pi\acute{a}n\tau\omega\nu$) before all things.” Some Unitarians evade this, by saying that $\pi\rho\circ$ is used metaphorically, to denote dignity or superiority: Christ is superior to all things. It has been justly observed, however, that the expression most properly refers to the order of time; and that when predicated of persons, either in the Septuagint or the New Testament, it always has that relation. If it were here understood of dignity, it would be a tautology with the preceding verse. Feeling the force of these considerations, as it would seem, Mr. Yates allows that $\pi\rho\circ\pi\acute{a}n\tau\omega\nu$ may denote pre-existence in time; but strongly contends that it signifies no more than that he existed before all things except himself and God. “It proves, therefore,” he adds, “at the very utmost, nothing more than our Lord’s existence before the creation of the universe.” To this it is replied in substance by Dr. Wardlaw, that the word “things” must necessarily mean *created* things; and therefore he himself cannot be a creature. “If he were of the number of created things himself, he could not be before all things,” says the Doctor, “for the very reason that he could not exist before himself. Of no being but an uncreated being can it, with strict propriety, be said, that he is before all created things.” Mr. Yates’s answer goes on the principle that, when the apostle says of Christ, “He is before all things,” both himself and God must necessarily be supposed to be excepted; so that the words do not

prove that he is not a creature,—He is before all things except himself and God. “He may, therefore,” Mr. Yates thinks, “be a created being after all; he is before all created beings except himself: an exception to which,” says our author, “the common sense of every reader leads.” I have laid the arguments on both sides before you; you must exercise your own judgments. Dr. Wardlaw’s reasoning is ingenious; but I confess it does not fully satisfy me that the apostle did not mean, “He is before all other things.” Thus understood, it would be an irrefragable proof of the pre-existence of Christ, but not of his eternal existence.

§ 6. SECONDLY.—*Omnipotence* is ascribed to Christ.

No being can possess omnipotence but the true God. I am perfectly aware of the difficulty of stating the degree beyond which power cannot be possessed by a created being. Arians—contending that a measure of power almost infinitely beyond any which we behold, or can conceive, may be communicated to a creature—imagine that Jesus, though a creature, was able to create the world, and did, in point of fact, create it. Conceding, however, the existence of the difficulty to which I have referred, it is, I imagine, perfectly manifest that all power, or omnipotence, must be an incommunicable attribute of Deity. If it can be shown that Christ possesses omnipotent power, he is beyond all question the true God.

The first passage we refer to is Isaiah xi. 6: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and his name shall be called, The mighty God.” The connection of this distinguished passage,—the citation of a part of that connection in the New Testament, as an express prediction of Christ,*—and the terms of the description,

* *Vide* Matt. iv. 14–16.

so absolutely exclusive of any other application, forbid the possibility of supposing that it refers to any but to Christ.

Admitting this, however, says Mr. Yates in substance, of what consequence is that to the point in hand? The doctrine now to be proved is, not that the Saviour was mighty, but that he was almighty. "The epithet 'mighty,' upon which the argument depends," he adds, "is applied in more than a hundred passages of the Old Testament to mere human beings."* An acute antagonist of Yates, the Rev. J. Brown, now of Edinburgh, says, what must be obvious to all, that "the force of the argument does not lie in the word *geber* simply; (it is passing strange that Mr. Yates should have so represented it;) but in the compound epithet *geber Al*, 'The mighty God.' Even Mr. Yates would be ashamed to say, he had proved that the latter of these words is not in the text. If he could have brought forwards a passage of Scripture in which the compound appellation was given to a mere human being, it would indeed have answered his purpose."† In addition to this, let it be remembered that it is by this same compound epithet that the true God is represented in the following chapter, verse 21: and there can be no doubt that it is intended, by the attribute of omnipotence, to distinguish him from the idols of the heathens, which could neither do good nor do evil; which were all vanity, and their work of nought. The compound epithet, *geber Al*, is in this last passage equivalent with "God the almighty;" and so we cannot but consider it in the ninth chapter, where its reference is to Christ. It is a tolerably strong proof of the conclusiveness of this argument, to find Mr. Yates, in the sequel to his "Vin-

* Page 202.

† *Strictures*, p. 50.

dication of Unitarianism," calmly asserting that the compound epithet *geber Al*, when applied to the Father, or "the Supreme Being," (to use his phraseology,) does not mean the same with "Almighty." He will rather overturn one of the proofs of the omnipotence of God himself, than admit, as he must do, if he allows its validity, that this attribute is possessed by Christ.

§ 7. The second passage to which we refer is Rev. i. 8: "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord;*"—or "*the Lord God,*" if we adopt the reading of Griesbach, "*which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*" It is unnecessary to recur again to the evidence on which we receive these words as the words of Christ. It is in vain for the Socinians to say, "They are the words of the Lord God, and therefore cannot be the words of Christ:" because the controversy between us is, whether Christ be the Lord God, or not; and we produce these very words to show that this is the case, asserting, at the same time, that the connection in which the words stand, and the manner of the writer in other parts of the book, concur to prove it. Mr. Yates tells us, that by the Fathers of the first four centuries, it is generally agreed that the word *παντοκράτωρ*, here translated "Almighty," is the peculiar designation of the Father. "It is nowhere," adds Mr. Yates, "in all the Scriptures, given to Christ." I have not been able to examine the Septuagint; but in the New Testament, the word only occurs in the second Epistle of Corinthians, and in the Apocalypse. Certainly, in all the other instances in which it is used, its application to the Father is undoubted. Mr. Yates, however, is wrong with reference to the Fathers; as the following quotation from Origen, given us by Jones, in his "Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity," shows. "Now that you

may know the omnipotence of the Father to be one and the same, as he is one and the same God and Lord with the Father, hear what St. John has said in the Revelation: ‘These things saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’ For who is the Almighty that is to come but Christ?”* The concluding words of Dr. Wardlaw are worthy of remark. “Even if we could not prove that Jesus is the speaker, the clear and frequent application of a part of these expressions to Christ is sufficient to justify us in the application of the whole. He who is ‘the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,’ ‘the first and the last,’ and ‘the living one,’ we may be well assured is also the ‘Almighty.’”†

The omnipotence of Christ may also be argued from the works which he has performed, requiring, as we contend, almighty power; but these will fall to be considered afterwards.

* Page 12, Eighth Edition.

† Page 206.

LECTURE VI.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

(CONTINUED.)

OMNISCIENCE ascribed to Christ:—the Socinian method of setting aside the testimony of Scripture on this subject:—OMNIPRESENCE:—the promise of our Lord to be with his disciples when gathered together in his name, neutralized by Unitarians:—Mr. Yates's theory:—the promise of our Lord to be with his disciples to the end of the world:—the *peculiar works of God* ascribed to Christ.

DIVINE PERFECTIONS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST.

§ 1. THIRDLY.—*Omniscience* is ascribed to Christ. “The evidence here,” says Dr. Wardlaw, “may be brought within a very short compass, for it is irresistibly conclusive.” “Thou, even THOU ONLY,” says Solomon, in his address to Jehovah at the dedication of the temple,—“Thou, even THOU ONLY, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.”* “The heart,” says God himself by the prophet Jeremiah, “is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I JEHOVAH search the heart, I try the reins, to give unto every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”† “I will kill her children with

* 1 Kings viii. 39.

† Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

death," says Christ to the church at Thyatira; "and all the churches shall know that I AM HE WHO SEARCHETH THE REINS AND HEARTS: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." * "If this," adds the Doctor, in language certainly strong, but not too strong, "be not a direct and unqualified claim of a peculiar Divine prerogative, there is no meaning in human language; and to search the Scriptures for clear and satisfactory knowledge must be a vain and fruitless task." †

In entire harmony with this language of Christ, the evangelist John informs us, that "when he was in Jerusalem, at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all men" (chap. ii. 23–25). Matthew and Luke also declare more than once that he knew the thoughts of those by whom he was surrounded; and Simon Peter addressed him, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." (John xxi. 17.)

§ 2. Socinians are in the habit of telling us that the expressions, "he knew all men," "knew their thoughts," are only strong modes of saying that he possessed a most intimate and profound knowledge of human nature,—a knowledge far superior in its degree to what is ordinarily possessed by men, but yet not beyond the capabilities of men. And it may be admitted that, if we had nothing more to guide our opinions than these passages, it might be difficult to prove the omniscience of Christ. We build mainly on the texts produced from the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of John. If he searches the hearts and reins—knew the actual state of Peter's heart, when external evidence was against his

* Rev. ii. 23.

† *Socinian Controversy*, pp. 95, 96, Second Edition.

professions, and strong grounds existed for suspecting their sincerity, he must be omniscient. Mr. Yates says that the latter clause of the passage in the Book of Revelation so far explains the former, “I will give to every one of you according to your works,” as to prove that it alludes to the office of Jesus Christ as the Judge of all. He admits that Christ is to be the Judge,—that he must, accordingly, be endued with all the knowledge of men’s thoughts and dispositions, which is necessary to the discharge of his office; but contends that it is imparted to him by God, and so does not prove his omniscience. With reference to the necessity of omniscience to qualify the Saviour for the office of Judge more will be said afterwards. At present I answer—

First,—that the possession of that perfect knowledge of the human heart which the Saviour claims, and which indeed is implied in the admissions of Socinians themselves, involves in it omniscience. I cannot conceive of a derived and communicated knowledge of the hearts of all men. But—

Secondly,—I answer, that our argument in support of the Deity of Christ is not merely built upon the evidence which the words themselves supply in support of his omniscience, but on the fact that the knowledge of the heart is, as we have ever asserted it to be, the sole prerogative of the Divine Being. Solomon addressed Jehovah as the Being who alone is acquainted with the hearts of men. “I am he who searches the reins and heart,” says Christ. The irresistible inference then is, that Christ is Jehovah. It is admitted that much knowledge may be communicated; and it may be allowed to be difficult to prescribe the bounds beyond which a creature cannot receive it: but the knowledge of the heart, being represented

as the sole prerogative of God, cannot be communicated to a creature.

§ 3. FOURTHLY.—*Omnipresence* is ascribed to Christ.

Matt. xviii. 20: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” These words were spoken to encourage believers, who may meet in various places at the same time, in their attention to the duty of social prayer. In the immediately preceding verse, he declares that if only two members of his spiritual church shall agree as touching anything they shall ask of their Father in heaven, it shall be done unto them; and then he adds, as a reason why their request should be granted, or to give them confidence that it would be granted, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Is not the conclusion irresistible, that Christ is omnipresent? If this conclusion needed support, we might confirm it, by comparing the words of our Lord with the assurance given to Moses by Jehovah, the God of Israel, Exod. xx. 24: “In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” “These two promises are precisely the same. They are both equally clear declarations of omnipresence; and the reasoning which would set aside the one would as effectually invalidate the other. No being could make either the one or the other, but a being who was present in all places, and who knew all things.”*

§ 4. Socinians have made, as it was to be expected, vigorous exertions to neutralize the testimony of so important a passage as this. The editors of the Improved Version declare that this promise, and those in the two preceding verses, are to be understood as limited to the apostolic age, and perhaps to the apostles themselves.

* *Socinian Controversy*, p. 92.

We answer, that this assertion is not only not supported by, but is at utter variance with the context. In the fifteenth and following verses, our Lord refers to possible offences which one member, not of the apostolic body, but of any Christian community, may commit against another. He directs, if private admonition should prove fruitless, that the offence should be told to the church, *i. e.* not to the apostles, but—as these editors themselves say—to the congregation of the faithful. And when the admonition of the church fails to bring the offender to repentance, he further directs that he should be excommunicated; while to prevent so solemn an act being regarded with unconcern, he proceeds to tell them, in substance at least, that the decisions of a Christian community, formed on a faithful adherence to the rules which the Head of that community has prescribed, will be approved by Christ himself. He immediately subjoins an encouragement to seek special direction in all cases of discipline, by assuring them that if only two of them, and *a fortiori* the whole church, should agree as touching what they should ask, it should be done for them; concluding with the words we are considering. Thus there is no specific reference to the apostles in the whole of the connection: the obvious meaning of the words is, that the prayers of every Christian church, attending to religious worship in the manner prescribed, should be favourably and fully answered.

Having thus endeavoured to limit the application of these verses, the editors next attempt to explain away the promise of Christ to be in the midst of them. They first resort to the supposition of a corporeal presence of Christ, which they conceive to have been occasionally afforded to the apostles, in circumstances of emergency, through the interval of time from his

ascension to the termination of the Jewish dispensation. We answer—

First,—that the supposition of any such presence rests on no grounds of Scripture evidence. The appearances of Christ to Stephen before the council—to Saul at his conversion, which is expressly called a heavenly vision—to Ananias—and to Paul on different occasions, which have been appealed to as affording foundation for the supposition, yield it no support whatever. They were miraculous visions; and in none of them is there the smallest reason to suppose that a real and tangible substance was presented to the individual, as the Unitarian hypothesis supposes.

Secondly,—that it is contradicted by plain declarations of the New Testament. Christ told his disciples, before his crucifixion, that he was soon finally to leave them, and to go to his Father; “and now,” he adds, “I am no more in the world, but these are in the world.” (John xvi. 7 and 28; xvii. 11.) The heavens were about to receive him, till the times of the restitution of all things; and as a human being, he was to be a resident of our earth no longer.

Thirdly,—that it would not remove the difficulty; for as the apostles might meet together in different places at the same time, how could Christ, if a mere man, if anything short of a Divine person, be with the whole of them?

The Socinian editors recur next to the notion of a spiritual presence, similar to the gift occasionally conferred upon the apostles of knowing things which passed in places where they were not actually present. They conceive this is illustrated by the language of Paul to the Corinthians, that he was with them in spirit. 1 Cor. v. 3, 4. Dr. Smith properly replies—

First,—that Christ does not speak of an occasional and extraordinary action. His words convey the idea of a constant benefit to his disciples. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Secondly: in the example of the apostle Paul’s being present in spirit with the religious assembly of the Corinthians, there is no evidence of anything more than that exercise of the imagination, in cases strongly interesting to us, which it is no uncommon form of speech, in all languages, to denote by an ideal presence.

The Socinian editors, lastly, insinuate, that when Christ said “There am I in the midst of you,” he may have meant no more than that he would be present with the apostles by his authority, and the miraculous powers he would bestow upon them. We answer—

First,—that such is not the fair, but a forced and unnatural construction of our Lord’s words.

Secondly,—that if the real meaning of the passage were, that Christ would be at all times with them by the communication of the necessary miraculous powers, it would still imply, as it has been justly observed, that he who is acknowledged to be the Author of the miracles, and whose power was immediately exercised on every such occasion, was actually present; and this presence could only be either by the occasional and corporeal action which has been considered, or by the manifestation of attributes properly Divine. We reply—

Thirdly,—that it is conclusive against this gloss, that our Lord did not refer specifically to the apostles, but to the disciples generally, to whom the promise of miraculous gift was not given.

§ 5. Mr. Yates, having too much candour—let us hope—to resort to any of these subterfuges, admits that

the words we are now considering imply the virtual presence of Christ with his disciples, in whatever part of the world they assemble. And in explanation of the term, he says, “A person is said to be virtually in any place, when his power and knowledge are exercised with respect to what passes in that place, as if he were actually present.” But though he makes this admission, he denies that the words prove the Divinity of Christ. To do this, he affirms, they ought to teach his actual omnipresence; *i. e.*, he adds, the extension of his substance through every part of space. This virtual presence, he further tells us, with strange inconsistency, is merely the exercise of power; having stated just before that it is the exercise of knowledge also. I give you the substance of Dr. Wardlaw’s admirable reply:—I have been accustomed to consider omnipresence, whether virtual or actual, as being one of the distinguishing perfections of the Deity. It is sufficiently obvious, even from its appellation, that virtual omnipresence is, in regard to the effects resulting from it, the same thing with actual omnipresence; that the possession of the latter communicates to the Being who possesses it no greater measure of knowledge or of power than is implied in the possession of the former. Yet a mere man, it seems, may be made to possess the former, although not the latter,—that is, a mere man may become God in knowledge and in power, only not in extension. In saying, continues Dr. Wardlaw, that this virtual presence is merely the exercise of power, he only blinds his reader. The virtual presence of which he speaks implies an unerring knowledge of all that is passing in every part of the world, at the same instant, and the power of producing effects in every part of the world, at the same instant; and this too, in

the case of Christ, at immeasurable distances from the place where the Being exists by whom the knowledge and power are possessed. This, the Doctor observes, is one of the mysteries of Unitarianism.

§ 6. We appeal to Matt. xxviii. 20, in proof of the omnipresence of Christ: "Lo, I am with you alway to the end of the world." Who but a being possessing the attributes of Deity could say this? Socinians tell us that by the phrase, *ἔως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰώνος*, is meant not the end of *the world*, but the conclusion of *that age*, or the termination of the *Jewish dispensation*, by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Admitting, for the sake of argument, the correctness of this rendering, we answer—

That it leaves the difficulty where it was before; for Jesus did not remain in the world, in his human nature, till the end of the age. He was immediately taken from the disciples; and after his departure, it was just as impossible for him to be with them, as to his corporeal presence at least, for a day as for an age, and for an age as for the whole duration of time. Besides, how could the corporeal presence of Christ be promised and actually vouchsafed, in every time of emergency, to the great body of the disciples, scattered abroad as they were to be throughout the whole world, and needing his presence, as they would and did, in various places, at the same time? The fiction, that this is a promise of the corporeal presence of Christ, involves not only a miracle, but an impossibility and an absurdity.

To diminish the difficulty, the Socinians, when hardly pressed, explain the promise to mean, that Christ would be with the apostles in working miracles to the end of the age. We reply—

First,—that even this leaves the difficulty unsolved:

for if the clause “I am with you alway” were allowed to mean “I will interpose to work miracles when miracles are necessary for the confirmation and success of your mission,” it would still imply the Divinity of Christ; for if he be not a Divine person, how could he have been aware of the instant, in all cases, in which the interposition of his power would be needed? and how especially could he have engaged, being a mere man, to exert the necessary power, at the precise moment when it was needed all over the world? We reply—

Secondly,—that the clause, “Lo, I am with you alway to the end of the world,” does not mean “to the end of the age,” as Socinians allege, but to the termination of the present state. The phrase *ἡ συντέλεια τοῦ αἰώνος* occurs only in the Book of Matthew; and merely in five instances, including the passage we are considering. It is to be found twice in the parable of the tares (Matt. xiii. 39, 40); once in that of the net cast down into the sea (verse 49): in all of which instances nothing but the most perverse attachment to system can lead an individual to doubt even that its reference is to the last day. It is used again in Matt. xxiv. 3: “The disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” This is the only instance, not now referring to the passage under consideration, in which there can be any doubt concerning the meaning of the words. Mr. Belsham is in great triumph here. He considers it decisive of the question. Here, he says, the phrase unquestionably means the Jewish dispensation, or rather polity. Dr. Smith’s reply is, I think, satisfactory and triumphant. The inquiry, he says, is that of the four disciples; and must therefore be interpreted in consonance with the then present state of their know-

ledge. They had no idea of the dissolution of the Jewish polity. They viewed the coming of Christ, and the end of the world, as events nearly related, and which would indisputably take place together. They thought the temple would stand till the end of the world; and therefore the phrase, *η συντέλεια τοῦ αἰώνος*, is here to be understood as in the former cases.

And if such be the meaning of the phrase in all the other instances in which it occurs, we are not only justified, but required to understand it, in the case before us, as referring to the close of the present state. Not only the words themselves, but the reason of the case demands this. “It is evidently reasonable,” says Dr. Smith, “to consider the extent of our Lord’s promise as commensurate with the purpose for the advancement and success of which it was given. That purpose was to make all nations disciples to the doctrine and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. To encourage his servants in their efforts to effect this design, the Saviour assures them of his own presence, as the King possessed of all power, both in heaven and on earth, for their aid and protection, their deliverance from all dangers, their surmounting all difficulties, and their eventual triumph in the full accomplishment of the great and benevolent purpose. But that purpose is not yet accomplished; and therefore the promise is not to be restricted to the apostles, or primitive evangelists, but is to be extended through all subsequent time, till all nations shall be blessed in Jesus.”

Thirdly.—We reply, that this being the case, the words, “I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,” are not to be considered as a promise that his miraculous power would be exerted; but that they should enjoy his spiritual presence, in the orthodox sense of the

word. The age of miracles is past; and therefore the exertion of miraculous power till the end of the world cannot have been promised. But the spiritual presence of Christ with his servants, to support them under their trials, to bless their labours, and to crown them with success, is still needed—still enjoyed. This then was the subject of promise; and the accomplishment of the promise affords decisive proof of the omnipresence of Christ.

§ 7. Our THIRD class of proofs is derived from the fact, that the peculiar works of God are ascribed to Jesus Christ.

FIRST.—The *creation* of the world is ascribed to him.

In proof of this assertion, we make our appeal—

First, to John i. 1–3: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” The parallelism between this passage and the introduction to the Book of Genesis, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” is so manifest, and so remarkable, that we cannot but conceive it would at once fix the meaning of the evangelist, were there not in the minds of some so deep a prejudice against the doctrine, which the common sense of the words goes to establish, as to resist all attempts to remove it. The Socinian objections against the orthodox interpretation of the passage will, all of them, I believe, be found to resolve themselves into two. It is said by some, that the clause “all things” does not refer to the visible material universe; so that the creation of the world is not in this passage ascribed to Christ. It is maintained by others, that though creation is ascribed to Christ, yet that the work was effected by him as an instrument, receiving his power to per-

form it from God; so that it supplies no proof of his Divinity.

1. It is said that the words *all things* do not mean the *visible material universe*; but all things which pertain to the Christian dispensation. This objection is professedly founded upon what they assert to be the meaning of the word rendered in our version “*were made*.” *Γίνομαι*, say the editors of the Improved Version, occurs upwards of seven hundred times in the New Testament; but never in the sense of “*to create*.” It signifies in this Gospel, where it occurs fifty-three times, “*to be*,” “*to come*,” “*to become*,” “*to come to pass*,” also “*to be done or transacted*.” Framing their rendering according to this rule, they say, in explanation of the words, “All things in the Christian dispensation were done by Christ, *i.e.* by his authority, and according to his direction; and in the ministry committed to his apostles, nothing has been done without his warrant.” It will therefore be necessary to examine the meaning of the term,—whether it is susceptible of the interpretation which is given to it in our version; and then to compare the two renderings, to ascertain, if both of them are admissible, which of them is the correct one.

With reference to the meaning of the term, I will only request your attention to the following statement of Dr. Smith. It is said by Mr. Belsham, that “*γίνομαι* never signifies *to create*.” Does “this writer really intend to convey to his readers that any critic, translator, or interpreter, had taken this verb in the active signification, *to create*? Or was it his wish to insinuate that the interpretation which he opposes *is founded upon* such an assumption? If however,” he adds, “the Inquirer and Annotator means to assert that this word never signifies *to BE created*, we are at issue with him. Its true and

proper signification is, *to be brought into existence*,—whether that be the first and original being of the subject, or any subsequent state or manner of existence. In all the variety of its applications, and by whatever different terms, according to its connection, it may be translated in other languages, it always retains its essential idea, that of *passiveness to a preceding cause*. Thus we find it in numerous places, where the unquestionable intention of the writer is to mark a *being produced*—a *being brought into existence for the first time*. The importance of the subject,” adds the Doctor, “and the bold language of the opponent, will be my apology for citing some examples; though the case is among the plainest possible to every scholar of moderate pretensions.” He accordingly cites Matt. xxi. 19; xxiv. 6; xxviii. 2; Mark ii. 27; Rom. i. 3; Gal. iv. 4; Heb. iv. 3; xi. 3; James iii. 9. “Thus,” adds the Doctor, “we have strong and abundant authority for our translation of this important sentence, ‘All things were made’ (or *produced*, or *brought into being* [or *existence*] ; and how does this differ from *being created*?) ‘by HIM; and without Him was not one thing made that has been made.’”* In addition to this, it may be observed, that no difficulty is involved in our translation of the passage. The context supplies no reasons of probability against it; while several important ones may be urged against that of our opponents.

The first argument may be taken from the use of the words *all things*. The Socinians restrict their meaning, without any reason from the context, to all institutions or appointments under the Christian dispensation. We reply—

First,—that while they can urge no shadow of pretext

* *Scripture Testimony*, vol. iii., pp. 95–97, Third Edition; vol. ii., pp. 232, 233, Fourth Edition.

from the context for thus limiting them, they do it in direct opposition to the usual and proper signification of the terms, which when they are used absolutely, as here, unquestionably denote the sum total of created things: for example, “Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” (Rev. iv. 11; also 1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. ii. 8; Rom. xi. 36.)

Secondly,—that the impropriety of this limitation is rendered perfectly manifest by the tenth verse of the chapter, where ὁ κόσμος stands in the room of πάντα, “the world was made by him,” and must be understood in the same sense. Now ὁ κόσμος cannot be understood in the restricted sense which the Unitarians attach to πάντα; but must mean the created universe, or the human race, a part being put for the whole. “All things” then mean, in short, “all things;” and not *some* merely, as the Socinians affirm.

Our second argument is derived from the difficulty of adjusting their sense of the word γίνομαι to the context. It never means “to create,” they affirm; but “to be,” “to come,” “to be done or transacted.” Of course ἐγένετο, in the third verse, must be rendered “all things were done by Christ;” a sufficiently awkward and bungling method of saying that all things under the Christian dispensation were established by the authority of Christ. Still, however, it may pass. But what shall we say of the tenth verse? ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο. It is manifest that here they must try some other scheme of rendering, since “the world was done by him” will never do. Accordingly they resort to the notable expedient of supposing that the participle πεφωτισμένος is to be understood, without the smallest necessity for any such addition, or indeed any addition at all; and so render the whole, and rather make a whole, “the world was enlightened by him.” Dr.

Wardlaw, very warrantably I think, laughs at this; and Dr. Smith shows that it is not Greek.* “I only ask,” says the former, “any person, who has learned the first elements of *English*, what he would think of a writer, who, intending to express the sentiment, that the world was enlightened by Jesus Christ, should write the substantive verb *was*, and leave the word *enlightened*—not only the principal word, but absolutely the only word by which his meaning could be determined—to be supplied by the reader?”† Certainly, we may add, he would need to be enlightened with a little common sense.

Our third argument against the rendering of our opponents is derived from the use of the word *beginning*. Of what possible use is this term, or what can be its meaning, if we are to understand by the passage—“All things under the Christian dispensation were done by Christ, or by his authority?” What is the point of time meant by “beginning?” There is an obvious connection between the expression,—*In the beginning*, and *all things were done by him*; the former expressing the time of the latter. “Beginning,” say the Socinian editors, “means the commencement of the Christian dispensation, or of the Saviour’s ministry.” But surely all the appointments and institutions of the gospel dispensation were not done at the beginning in this sense of the term! One of the most important, the ordinance of the Supper, was not done or appointed till the end of his ministry. Will it be said, they were all done in purpose, though not in act? I answer, they were all done in this sense long before the beginning, even from eternity. In short, the phrase *In the beginning* cannot be brought to harmonize with the

* Γένομαι cannot be put in apposition with a passive participle like εἰμι.—*Scripture Testimony*, as quoted on p. 108.

† *Socinian Controversy*, pp. 106, 107.

Socinian rendering. According to our translation, on the other hand, all is plain and connected and consistent. If we connect the expression, *In the beginning*, with the declaration, *all things were made by him*, and consider the writer as speaking of the original formation of the universe material, and as referring to the language of the inspired historian of the creation, at the opening of the Book of Genesis,—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,”—we obtain not only a definite meaning to each of the phrases separately, but, at the same time, a manifest and consistent alliance between them.

You will have observed that, both in the third and tenth verses, the preposition $\delta\imath\alpha$ is used with a genitive; the ordinary force of which we shall examine more fully presently. Mr. Cappe, understanding $\pi\acute{a}\nu\tau\alpha$ in the same manner with his brethren, and $\delta\kappa\sigma\mu\sigma$ to mean the Jewish dispensation, seems to think he may serve the cause of Unitarianism, by taking $\delta\imath\alpha$ to express the final cause—not the power by which anything is done, but the object for which it is done. The world was made, not by Christ, either as the primary or instrumental cause, but on account of him, or for his sake. The rule however is, that when $\delta\imath\alpha$ is intended to denote the final cause, it is followed by the accusative; with the genitive it denotes the efficient cause: and we ought not to violate this rule in translation without necessity. Mr. Cappe does not deny that such is the general rule, but produces several cases of exceptions, as they appear to him at least. We deny—

First,—the correctness of his statements with regard to the exceptions. Not one of the scriptural instances which are alleged by Mr. Cappe of $\delta\imath\alpha$ with a genitive, signifying the final cause or motive, appears to me satis-

factory,—viz., Rom. i. 8; xv. 30; 2 Cor. viii. 5; v. 7; Heb. xi. 4; James ii. 12; 1 Peter iv. 11; and Septuagint, 2 Chron. xxix. 25. “Scarcely any of the passages seem to admit that sense, and none of them to require it.” The Doctor shows also that the other instances of classical authority quoted by Cappe, and so much vaunted by the Socinian editors, are evident misconceptions of the author’s meaning. We answer—

Secondly,—that if an undoubted instance could be produced from the New Testament in which $\delta\alpha$ with the genitive must mean the final cause, that would not justify us in so rendering it here, where there is no necessity to impel any one so to translate it, but the necessity of getting rid of the doctrine of the SAVIOUR’S DIVINITY.

LECTURE VII.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

(CONTINUED.)

The Arian hypothesis, that creation was effected by our Lord as *an instrument*:—the work of creation requires omnipotent power:—the testimony of Scripture that God is the sole Creator:—the power of creation ascribed to Christ said to be *derived*:—the substance, on this point, of the controversy between Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Yates:—the official character of Christ supplies the only satisfactory reply to Yates:—all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, afford a proof of Christ's Divinity:—Dr. Priestley's criticism upon:—Heb. i. 10, 11, a proof:—the *sustentation* of all things ascribed to Christ.

DIVINE WORKS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST—CREATION.

§ 1. The *second* objection against the orthodox interpretation of the passage is, that admitting that creation is here ascribed to Christ, it does not prove his Divinity, since the work was effected by him as *an instrument*, receiving his power to perform it from God. This, as you know, was the opinion of the ancient Arians; the descendants of whom form but a very inconsiderable body at the present day, Socinianism having committed great ravages upon the sect, and indeed almost annihilated it. This opinion we proceed to examine.

It is justly observed by Waterland, in his “Sermons

on the Divinity of Christ," (p. 94,) that "the Arians were never more perplexed about anything than in accounting for God's taking in a creature to be his agent and operator in making the world. What! make one creature in order to make others! Why might he not rather have made all creatures, as well as one, and reserved the sole glory of so great and so stupendous a work as that of creating to his own self? Did he want the assistance of an inferior being? or was not his own will and fiat sufficient to give birth to all things? Besides, did he cease to work after he made the Son, leaving it to a creature of his own to have, in a manner, the honour of doing of everything else, and to be the immediate agent and manager in all things both in heaven and earth?" Arians would perhaps reply, that our inability to state any reasons which may have led the great Eternal to employ the instrumentality of a creature, in the work of bringing the universe into existence, ought not to be regarded as proof that such instrumentality was not employed. We are too incompetent to judge in the case, to walk by the light of our own judgment. We oppose then the tenet by the following additional arguments.

First.—We ask to be informed in what manner they understand the proposition, that God created the world by Jesus Christ, supposing that he was a creature? Do they mean that God communicated a measure of power to Christ adequate to the performance of the stupendous work, which power resided habitually in him, and may be said to have been his own power, in the same sense in which the degree of mental and bodily power which the Creator has imparted to us may be denominated ours, and which needed not increase, but sustentation merely, to render its possessor equal to the mighty task

of creating the universe? or do they merely mean that Christ, as a creature, had power to create the universe, in the same sense in which apostles had power to perform miracles? If they mean the latter,—we reply, that on this scheme Christ did not create the universe at all. The signs and wonders, which followed the volitions of the apostles that they should take place, were not accomplished by any inherent energy of theirs, but by the power of God. When they said, “Let the sick be restored, the blind receive their sight, the dead be raised to life again,” their minds were under a Divine impulse; and it was the same Being who prompted them to speak that performed the wonders to which we have referred, in the sight of all men. Hence it is said (Acts xv. 12), that it was God who performed the miracles and wonders which had been done among the Gentiles, by or through Paul and Barnabas. It would be a monstrous perversion of idea, to suppose that a single miracle was ever accomplished by the power of the apostles: all was the power of God. If they mean to assert the former, or to say that it was by the Saviour’s proper power that he created the world, although they should grant that that power was not natural and essential to him; we would proceed to urge against them our—

§ 2. *Second argument*,—viz. that the work of creation requires, in our apprehension, omnipotent power, which cannot of course be communicated to any creature. No instrumentality then can be employed in creation; the universe must have proceeded immediately and directly from the hand of God. If Christ be a mere creature, he cannot have created the world; if he has created the world, he must be God. It is the dictate of common sense, that the power of creating the universe must be infinite power. “If creative power,” says an

able writer, “be capable of *transference* or *communication* to a creature, I can conceive of nothing else which may not; and must look on him who can believe in this fancy as a believer in the possibility of the communication of *all the Divine perfections*; an idea which would startle even a Trinitarian, with all his insatiable appetite for mystery.” “He must have lost his reason,” says Allix, in his “*Judgment of the Jewish Church*,” “who imagines that God can make a creature capable of creating the universe? Grant this; and by what character will you distinguish the creature from the Creator?”* Even Unitarians themselves admit this. “Why might not the power of self-subsistence,” says Dr. Priestley, “be imparted to another, as well as that of creating out of nothing?” I am well persuaded that nothing but the necessities of a system could lead any rational man to doubt that the work of creation requires omnipotence, and consequently underived, uncommunicated, and incommunicable power. Our—

§ 3. *Third argument* is, that the Arian hypothesis of Christ being the instrument of creation is opposed by those declarations—and they are abundant—which represent God as the sole Creator of the heavens and the earth. How could it be with truth affirmed that God stretched out the heavens alone, if he employed the instrumentality of a creature in doing it? How could he require to be worshipped exclusively, because he is the only Creator, if the world was formed by Jesus Christ, himself being a creature? “The Arians,” says Allix, “who worship Jesus Christ, though they esteem him a creature, and the Papists, who swallow whole the doctrine of Transubstantiation; they may teach in their schools that a creature may be enabled by God to

* *Unitarianism incapable of Vindication, a Reply to the Rev. J. Yates*, by Dr. Wardlaw, pp. 235, 236.

become a creator! But as for us, who deny that anything but God is to be adored, we reject all such vain conceits of a creature being any way capable to receive the infinite power of a creator.”*

§ 4. Notwithstanding the force of these reasonings, a certain class of Unitarians turn round upon us, and in effect say, We appeal to the law and the testimony. It may be difficult to conceive of derived power to create the universe; but the Scriptures distinctly affirm that the world was created by Christ, and with equal clearness declare that the power by which he effected the work was not independent but derived power. So says Mr. Yates. Having quoted the passages which are commonly appealed to,—“The Greek words,” says he, “employed in these passages cannot bear to be interpreted so as to ascribe to our Lord the creation of the material world by his own uncommunicated omnipotence. The common translation,” he adds, “leaves the matter undecided, whether the work was effected by his own underived and independent authority, or merely as an instrument directed by the Supreme Being. In the Greek original there is no such ambiguity. The preposition *διὰ*, in these passages translated *by*, does not signify *by* any one, as an original cause,—for this sense is expressed by a different preposition, *ἐπό*; but it denotes *through* anything as an instrument. For the sake of illustration, I shall take the first example of the occurrence of *διὰ* in the New Testament, Matt. i. 22: ‘Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord *by* the prophet;’ or more accurately, ‘which was spoken *by* the Lord *through* the prophet.’ In the first place, the preposition *ἐπό*, *by*, points out the Lord as the original author of the communication; and in the second place, the preposition *διὰ*, *through*,

* *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, p. 193.

represents the prophet as the medium through whom this communication was conveyed to mankind. The same distinction," he adds, "is accurately observed in all cases—and they are very numerous—in which the New Testament writers produce quotations from the prophets of the Old. They never introduce a prophecy by saying that it was uttered through the Lord, *διὰ τοῦ Κύριου*; and they very seldom, if ever, say that it was delivered by the prophet, *ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου*; but through the prophet, and by the Lord."

On this point Mr. Yates dwells at great length: he evidently considers his argument with reference to it the best part of his book; and it must be admitted that, in defence of his position, he has displayed some classical lore, and much critical acumen. Dr. Wardlaw also arrays himself in his best armour for the contest here; but I confess myself constrained to acknowledge that, while his critical sagacity sinks on this point, in comparison with his antagonist, his ordinary judgment appears in some measure to have deserted him. I will give you a short sketch of the argument—state wherein the Doctor appears to me to fail, and what I am disposed to regard as the legitimate reply to this Jesuitical and proud Socinian boaster.

§ 5. The Doctor admits that *διὰ* is more naturally employed to denote the instrumental cause than *ὑπὸ*, in consequence of the signification of the former as stated by Mr. Yates, viz. motion through a place. Hence, he adds, it has been transferred by an obvious process to the way or method by passing through which any object is attained; or the instrument by means of which any end is accomplished. Having made this admission, which in fairness cannot be avoided, the Doctor goes on to show that the rule is not invariable—that there are

exceptions to it—that while $\delta\alpha$ frequently signifies, in opposition to the rule, the primary cause, so is $\nu\pi\circ$ sometimes used for the secondary.

In proof of the latter, or that $\nu\pi\circ$ is sometimes used for the secondary or instrumental cause, Dr. Wardlaw gives ten instances; in two of which it unfortunately happens that, taking Griesbach for our guide, the preposition $\nu\pi\circ$ does not occur; and to four others of which the same authority has prefixed marks to express his opinion that it is doubtful. There still remain, however, four undisputed instances in which $\nu\pi\circ$ denotes an instrumental cause.

The other preposition however, $\delta\alpha$, is of more importance in the controversy; and the Doctor appeals to eighteen passages, as affording so many instances of the use of this preposition to denote the primary or efficient cause. Mr. Yates examines the whole of them with great minuteness; and declares, as the result of the examination, that only one of this long list, one which he himself had referred to, furnishes an exception to his canon, or requires to be understood as denoting an efficient or primary cause. That one is in 1 Cor. i. 9: “God is faithful, by whom ($\delta\iota' o\hat{v}$) ye were called.” I am constrained to say that I think Mr. Yates generally successful; though there are perhaps two or three instances, in addition to the one acknowledged by him, in which he appears to me to have failed. One is Rom. vi. 4: “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death,”—*i. e.* “through baptism,” says Mr. Yates; and that may be admitted. But when the apostle adds, “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,” how can we say ‘through’ here? Mr. Yates says the expression “the glory of the Father” means the glorious power of the Father; so that the

power of God is represented as the instrument through which the work was effected. It evidently means, however, the glorious Father; so that the Father himself is represented as the agent, and $\deltaι\alpha$ denotes the efficient cause. Still more decided is Heb. ii. 10: "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things:"* $\deltaι\alpha$ with the accusative, in the first instance, ($\deltaι' \deltaν$) denotes the final cause; with the genitive in the latter ($\deltaι' ο\delta$), the efficient, the original, and not the instrumental cause.

The result of the controversy is, I think, that Dr. Wardlaw has proved that $\nu\pi\circ$ occasionally means the instrumental cause, and $\deltaι\alpha$ occasionally the original cause. The question still, however, remains to be settled, In what sense is it to be understood in the passage before us? And here, I apprehend, Dr. Wardlaw has failed. To prove that $\deltaι\alpha$ may be used, in the sense which the Doctor attaches to it, is not to prove that it must so be understood here. The probability, from the general force of the preposition, is rather against this sense; so that, on the Doctor's principles, we lose this passage as an independent proof of the Divinity of Christ.

§ 6. I think, then, that the only satisfactory answer to Yates is that which is afforded by the official character of Christ. The whole plan of human redemption emanated from God, *i. e.* the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Its execution, however, was especially committed to the second person of the adorable Trinity. As the agent or instrument of accomplishing the purposes of the Eternal Mind, he clothed himself in our nature, and made peace by the blood of his cross. In the same character also, I think, he created the world,—the world being the destined theatre on which the great

* $\text{Ἐπρεπε } γὰρ αὐτῷ, δι' δν τα πάντα καὶ δι' οὐ τα πάντα, &c.}$

work of redemption was to be accomplished; and being in this sense the agent or instrument of the great Eternal—Father, Son, and Spirit—in this business, it is said that all things were created *δι' αὐτοῦ*,—the preposition *ὑπό* not being employed, because not proper, or so proper. In this sense, God is said to have created the world by Jesus Christ. He created it in the same sense in which he redeemed it by Christ. The preposition marks out no subordination of power, but merely of station. It does not teach that Christ did not create the world by his own proper power; but intimates that that power was put forth as an instrument in accomplishing the purposes of the Triune God. I am happy to find this solution of the fact, which had occurred to my own mind, supported by the following passage from so great an authority as that of Waterland. “While we acknowledge the Son of God to be Creator, we acknowledge him a Son also; the second only, not the *first* person of the Trinity. The Father therefore is primarily Creator, as Father. He is first in conception, whenever we speak of the Divine nature. And hence it is that he is said to create by the Son; and he is eminently and emphatically represented in the creeds, as Maker of heaven and earth; the Son having another title more peculiar to him, that of Redeemer. The Nicene Creed, as do many other ancient creeds, takes notice of the worlds being made by the Son; yet so that he did not make the world by the Father, but the Father by him. This is the constant language of antiquity, always keeping up some eminence of order, as proper to the first person, along with the true essential Divinity of the other two. This distinction of order, consistent with a parity of nature, they learned from Scripture, and inviolably maintained.”*

* *Sermons on Divinity of Christ*, p. 99.

§ 7. The next passage we refer to is Col. i. 16: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him,”—τὰ πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτισται.

It is important to observe here wherein we and our antagonists are agreed. With respect to the former passage, they deny that *ἐγένετο* is properly rendered *were made*. Here however they are constrained to allow that *ἐκτισται* *really* means *were created*. But does this settle the controversy? By no means. After all, it appears that “all things” do not mean “all things,” and that “created” does not mean “created.” The phrase “all things,” it is alleged, is not to be understood as denoting beings themselves, but certain states and orders of beings; and the term “creation” itself means that great change which was introduced into the moral world, and particularly into the relative situation of Jews and Gentiles, by the dispensation of the gospel. This, one would think, is using considerable freedom with Scripture; but this is only a representation of the minor half of the licence taken by our antagonists. If the expressions which the apostle employs, when he comes to enumerate what is included under the general phrase “all things,” could possibly be conceived to mean that great moral change of which they speak, it might be less absurd to employ the term “creation” with reference to it. But this cannot be conceived. Our opponents do not conceive it. They are constrained to admit that the real truth which the words were intended to convey is couched under a symbol,—and such a symbol as none but a Socinian would ever dream of. “This great change,” say the editors of the Improved Version, “the apostle describes

under the symbol of a revolution introduced by Christ, among certain ranks and orders of beings by whom, according to the Jewish demonology, borrowed from the Oriental Philosophy, the affairs of states and individuals were superintended and governed.” It is difficult to repress a strong expression of indignation at such attempts to explain, or rather perplex the word of God. According to the Socinian hypothesis, the apostle talks about certain beings who have no existence. He says of Christ, that he created them; but that, we are told, means only that he effected a revolution amongst them, —*i. e.*, be it remembered, a revolution among nonentities: and then we are informed, that this statement of a revolution effected amongst nonentities is a symbolical mode of stating that a great moral change was effected by the introduction of the Christian dispensation. Verily, it is scarcely possible to conceive, that one of the plainest of truths could have been more darkly and inadequately expressed.

§ 8. An attempt is made to found an objection to the commonly received meaning of these words, on the occurrence of the preposition “*in*.” “It is obvious to remark,” says Dr. Priestley, “that the things which Christ is said to have made are not the heavens and the earth, but only *some* things that are *in* the heavens and *in* the earth.”* We reply—

First,—that the creation of *some* things affords as decided a proof of omnipotent power as the creation of *all* things. Our argument is not mainly and radically built on the magnitude of the creation, but on the act of creation abstracted from all considerations of little or more.

Secondly,—that the phrase, “by him were all things

* *History of Early Opinions*, vol. i., p. 65.

created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible," is just what might have been expected, considering the design with which the assertion was made. The manifest object of the apostle was to exalt the conceptions of the Colossians of the glory of the Saviour. He declared, in the clause immediately preceding the one we are now considering, that he is the firstborn of the whole creation, *i.e.* the heir, the chief, the Lord of all—superior in dignity to all beings; and to prove this, he proceeds to state that all beings were created by him. It would not have answered his purpose, to show that the material universe was created by him; at any rate, his supremacy could not have been so directly gathered from such an assertion. The "all things in heaven and in earth" obviously mean the two great classes of intelligent beings, whom sin had set at variance,—the celestial natures which have never fallen, and those of mankind who are recovered, through the blood and grace of Christ, from their state of alienation and enmity; the former are the things in heaven, the latter the things on earth.

With the recollection of these difficulties, into which the Socinians plunge themselves by their forced explanation of the passage, you will not wonder that Mr. Yates adopts the old Arian interpretation, that Christ created the world as a subordinate agent, grounding his opinion on the alleged meaning of the preposition *διὰ*. It is unnecessary to repeat what has been said on that subject.

§ 9. The last passage we appeal to is Heb. i. 10, 11: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed;

but thou art the same, and *thy years* shall not fail." These words ought to settle the point in controversy at once. Against the first passage produced by us, it was alleged that a word was used which did not signify creation: and though, with respect to the second, it is admitted that the word which properly denotes creation is used; yet it is objected that the creation of which it speaks is not that of the heavens and the earth themselves, but of things *in* heaven, and things *in* earth,—not a material, but a spiritual creation. But in the passage before us, we have creation ascribed to Christ in the precise form required. As it is impossible to doubt that the words "creation," "heaven," and "earth," &c., are here used in their literal sense, there is no resisting this proof of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, but either by denying that the passage is an address to Christ, or by affirming that he created the world as a subordinate agent. Both of these positions have been refuted.

§ 10. SECONDLY.—The *sustentation* of all things is ascribed to Christ.

Col. i. 17: "By him," says the apostle, "all things consist."

Heb. i. 1-3: "God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power," or "his powerful word,"* "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

* A Hebraism, conveying the idea that he does not sustain the world with effort, but by a simple volition.

The Greek terms translated “consist” and “upholding” are, in Colossians συνέστηκε, and in Hebrews φέρων. Τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκε is thus rendered by Dr. Morus of Leipzig, “*Omnia per eum constant, durant, permanent;*” by Schleusner, “*Omnia potentissime ab eo conservantur et reguntur.*” Both understand the passage of the physical universe. Φέρειν, an eminent biblical critic tells us, is used as נָשַׁׁת* and סְכִּל, which the Rabbinical writers use in the sense of supporting and preserving; *e.g.*, “The holy and blessed God supports his own world.”†

We have more than once had occasion to remark, that a being who is not self-existent at the first moment of its existence cannot be so at the second, or at any subsequent moment; but must be dependent at all times upon the power from whom its existence was derived. As we should have been nothing, had we not been created; so we should become nothing, were we not preserved. The sustentation of derived and dependent existence is equivalent, indeed, to a continued act of creation. It is not wonderful, therefore, that this work should be ascribed in the Scriptures to God alone. Neh. ix. 6: “Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone,” said the Levites; “thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.” In this passage it is declared, in the most explicit terms, that He who preserves all things is the Being worshipped by the host of heaven, “Jehovah alone.” Yet all things consist by Christ, and he upholds them all by the word of his power. **HE THEREFORE IS JEHOVAH.**

* Isaiah lxiii. 9.

† Schoettgenius.

LECTURE VIII.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS DIVINITY.

(CONTINUED.)

Universal government ascribed to Christ:—First objection to the passages quoted to sustain that idea—that they are to be understood figuratively:—Second objection—that the qualifications necessary to exercise this sovereignty do not imply Divinity:—the *judgment* of the world ascribed to Christ:—Yates's objection:—His judging the world may mean only that the final state of all will be according to the declarations of the gospel:—Divine worship paid to Christ, a proof of his Divinity:—the Socinian interpretation of such passages:—instances in which worship has been offered to Christ:—the case of Stephen:—instances in which Christ is joined with the Father:—benedictions in the epistles:—the evidence derived from Rev. v. 6–14.

DIVINE WORKS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST.

§ 1. THIRDLY.—The *government* of all things and beings is ascribed to Christ.

“All power,” said he, in the immediate prospect of leaving the world, “is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. xxviii. 18.)

Rom. xiv. 9: “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”

Phil. ii. 9–11: In consequence of his obedience, even

to the death of the cross, “God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Ephes. i. 20–23: God hath “raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

The government of Christ is universal. Col. i. 18: “He is the head of the body, the church;” and head over all things to or for the church. The empire of providence, as well as of grace, is put into his hands, that every event which takes place in the world may be rendered tributary to the promotion of his purposes of mercy towards an apostate world. To these sentiments, built upon the passages which have been quoted, it has been objected—

§ 2. *First*.—That the texts themselves are to be understood figuratively. The actual exaltation of Christ to the government of the world has been pronounced a notion unscriptural and most incredible. All that is said on the subject, it is alleged, means not the personal authority of our Divine Master, but the prevalence of his religion in the world. The reign of Christ is the empire of his gospel over the hearts and lives of its professors.

Answer 1.—If these passages may be thus explained away, under the pretence of their being figurative, it

will be difficult or impossible to decide what is to be literally understood. What language could have been employed to express a real and literal exaltation of Christ in his human nature to the throne of universal dominion, more plain and pointed, and divested of all appearance of figure, than the passages which have been quoted?

Answer 2.—If the empire of the gospel of Christ over the hearts and lives of men were conceded to be a sufficient explanation of the power he is said to exercise on earth, how could it explain that which he is said to exercise in heaven? His power is not confined to the world,—power in heaven as well as on earth is given to him. He is exalted above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. Is the authority, or government, or reign of Christ in heaven, the influence of his gospel upon the minds of its blessed inhabitants? And if it be, must not that influence be perpetuated throughout eternity? How then can it be said of him that he will deliver up the kingdom to his Father? And yet it is actually affirmed that he will at length become subject to him who did put all things under him, that God may be all in all,—an expression which is easily explained by the supposition of his laying down the mediatorial, or, as I imagine, the providential kingdom; but which must be utter nonsense in the mouth of a Socinian,—for how can the influence of the gospel of Christ become subject to God the Father?

§ 3. *Objection the Second* proceeds on the admission that the passages are to be literally understood—that the sovereignty of Christ over the world is real and not figurative merely; but denies that the qualifications necessary to the exercise of this sovereignty are such as

imply his Divinity. This view of the matter is thought to be supported by the circumstance that his authority is said to have been given to him. "All power," he himself says, "is given to me in heaven and in earth." This shows, it is alleged, that it is not inherent and essential to him, but derived. We answer—

First.—that the government of the universe requires, if anything requires, the attributes of an infinite mind;—goodness to prompt, justice to direct, knowledge to discern, and power to execute whatever is right, wise, and good to be done, and to prevent the existence of whatever is not. It demands, also, existence everywhere present, and eternally enduring, throughout the boundless and everlasting kingdom of God. Without these attributes, Christ must be the Lord only in name, and rule only in pretence. In short, if omniscience and omnipotence are not required for the government of the world, it will be difficult to specify any work which requires infinite perfections; and we are thus cut off from all proof that Jehovah himself is an infinite being. We answer—

Secondly.—The circumstance of this authority being represented as given to him is by no means inconsistent with the idea of his supreme, underived Godhead. The solution of the difficulty must be sought for in the double view which the Scriptures give us of his character. He was God; and he was the Mediator between God and man. As God, the government of the world was essentially vested in him. It was impossible that he could be divested of it. But he had to purchase a right as Mediator to exercise those attributes which were essential to him as God in the government of the world. To govern the world as Mediator, and so to cause every event to minister to the promotion of the

purposes of his grace, was to be the reward of his sufferings unto death; and therefore, when the Saviour said, “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth,” he meant that he had now obtained a right to exercise his omnipotent power as God in his mediatorial character, and that hereafter all events and all beings would in that character be under his direction and control, till the mystery of Providence should be finished, when God shall be all and in all.

§ 4. FOURTHLY.—The *judgment* of the world at the last day is ascribed to Christ.

Rom. xiv. 10: “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”

Acts xvii. 31: God “hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

John v. 22, 23: “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.”

Acts x. 42: “He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of living and dead.”

2 Tim. iv. 1: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.” *

These passages decidedly prove that the Lord Jesus Christ will be, in the true and proper sense of the Lord, the Judge of mankind at the last day: not a mere pronouncer of sentences dictated by the supreme Jehovah, for that would be to be *no* Judge; but the Being who, in

* *Vide* Matt. xxv. 31.

the exercise of his own inherent qualifications, will decide upon the eternal state of all men at the bar of God.

To discharge this office, there is manifestly required “a perfect and unerring acquaintance with all the thoughts and words and actions, in all their endless variety of circumstances, of every individual person, of all the numberless generations of mankind, that shall have existed from the beginning to the end of time; and in every successive moment of the existence of each. Can this knowledge then be possessed by a being who is not omniscient, and consequently not God?”—We think not. Mr. Yates however—and other Unitarians agree with him—with a laughable expression of reluctance to argue the point at all, on the grounds of mere human reason, maintains,—and this is the—

§ 5. *First objection* against our statement,—that Divine perfections are not required in the Judge. “So far as I can judge,” is his language, “the power and knowledge of such an exalted person may rationally be supposed to be not only limited, but also derived and dependent.” He does not know any reason why the knowledge of such a person “should comprehend the actions, characters, and deserts, not only of those who come before his tribunal, but of all intelligent beings who have existed in other regions of space, and in other periods of eternity.” We answer—

That since it must clearly imply, beyond all controversy, the amount of knowledge which has been just stated—a knowledge of the thoughts and circumstances of all men, at every moment of time, it can only have an omniscient mind for its subject. It has been well and justly observed, that though the faculties of the man Christ Jesus will proceed through an indefinite range of the most glorious and happy improvement; yet that

nothing but the stupendous advantage of the intimate, unique, and mysterious union of the Divine with the human nature could qualify him for the work of judgment.

To argue as Mr. Yates does, that because the manifestation of knowledge which will be made by the great day is finite, the Judge himself is not omniscient, is to adopt a line of argument which would go to overthrow the omniscience of the Creator himself: for even there our data are limited; and it might be said, with equal plausibility, that the Former of all things may have produced all these striking proofs of wisdom, and after all his wisdom be limited.

The great champion of Socinianism, Mr. Belsham, admits that the statements concerning the judgment present a great difficulty. He suggests *en passant*, by way of alleviating its pressure, that the powers and qualifications superior to those which Christ possessed on earth, and which are necessary to it, may be attained either by the regular and progressive improvement of his powers, in the long interval between his ascension and the day of judgment, or they may be imparted to him for the occasion by God himself, whose organ and delegate he will be on that occasion,—*i. e.*, as we have said, he will be *no* Judge, but a mere pronoucer of sentences. Feeling however, apparently, the insecurity of this ground, Mr. Belsham ultimately rests in what I shall state as the—

§ 6. *Second objection* to our statements,—viz. that when Christ is represented as appointed by God to judge the world, nothing more may be intended by this language but that the final states of all, and every individual of mankind, shall be awarded agreeably to the declarations of the gospel. Christ is in fact to be a

figurative judge; all the passages we have quoted are to be figuratively understood. "In perfect analogy with this interpretation, Christ," continues Mr. Belsham, "is figuratively represented as a lawgiver, because the precepts of his gospel are laws to govern the conduct of his disciples; he is figuratively a priest, because he voluntarily delivered himself up as a victim. He is figuratively a conqueror, and a king, and universal dominion is ascribed to him, because his gospel and religion will eventually prevail through the world; in like manner, he is figuratively a judge, because the final states of all mankind will be awarded agreeably to the solemn, repeated, and explicit declarations of his gospel."

"The caution," says Dr. Smith, observing upon this statement, "administered by the early Christian writers may prove to be the wisest and the best: let those who regard the Lord Jesus Christ as a figurative priest, a figurative lawgiver, king, and judge, beware, lest, in the day of their extremity, they find only a figurative salvation."

Answer.—"This mode of interpreting would require, if acted upon consistently, to be followed into an application to the whole system of revealed truth; and in that case the New Testament might, with a very little trouble, and with great plausibility, be stripped of everything supernatural, and even the doctrine of a future state itself be got rid of."* This language of an excellent writer is strong, but not too strong. The statements concerning the judgment are not confined to a passage or two. We have mentioned several; many more might have been added. It is not stated merely that we shall

* [*Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., pp. 236–256, Third Edition; vol. ii., pp. 35–48, Fourth Edition. Consult the entire CAPITULE, (the vi., that is, the one,) from which the above extracts are taken.]

be judged, nor even that Christ shall judge us; but we have a minute and graphic description of the proceedings of the day of judgment. The Judge, viz. Christ, we are told, shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and all his holy angels with him. Again we are told, that he shall sit down upon the throne of his glory—that all nations shall be gathered together before him—that he shall separate them into two grand divisions, and then proceed to pass sentence upon each. Now if all this is really a mere figurative representation of the plain truth, that men will at length be judged according to the decisions of Christ in his gospel,—if he is after all not even to appear personally as a judge,—and especially, as must be the case on the Socinian hypothesis, which affirms him to have been *ψιλὸς ἀνθρωπός*, if he is to appear at the bar of God himself, to take his trial in common with his brethren;—if all this is really the case, I will only say that there is no book in the world more powerfully adapted to mislead plain unlettered men than the Bible.

§ 7. FIFTHLY.—Divine worship is represented in the New Testament as having been paid to Christ, and therefore Christ must be God.

1. It is claimed for him.

John v. 22, 23: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,”—*καθὼς*, “according as,” in the same manner or the same degree. The connection in which these words stand—the object of our blessed Lord in the statements he makes, as well as the terms he employs, all conspire to prove that it is religious worship that is meant. “Whenever in Scripture,” says an able writer, “the phrase ‘to honour God’ occurs, or any equivalent expression, it

always denotes religious homage; the making God our end and object in all our actions, the celebration of his praises, obedience to him, and confidence in him: and this his glory he will not give to another. To honour then the Son, as we honour the Father, must be to have our thoughts, affections, and actions directed to him, and our hope and confidence reposed on him, in the same manner; and though the formal act of prayer, or any other explicit mode of adoration be not mentioned, all and every act or mode of worship is included, as the species under a genus."

Heb. i. 6: "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (*προσκυνησάτωσαν*). The Unitarians can only evade the force of this passage by showing that the injunction does not contain a command of religious worship. This they accordingly attempt to do. The editors of the Improved Version render the words, "Let all the messengers of God do homage to him;" and give the following comment upon them. "Let all the prophets and messengers of God acknowledge him as their superior." Upon this word an able critic observes, that it is used twenty-four times in the New Testament to denote the worship of the true God; that it is used many times more to denote the religious worship of false gods; and that it is, so far as he has observed, the only word used to denote what is intended by worship, when considered as an act immediately performed. The words *θεραπεύω*, *λατρεύω*, and *σέβομαι*, rendered also "to worship," appear rather either to express habitual reverence or service, or a general course of worship considered as a character or course of life: *προσκυνέω*, so far as I have been able to observe, he adds, is the only term used to denote religious worship by St. John; and

is certainly the appropriate word for this idea, if there is any such appropriate word in the New Testament. It is the word, he adds, used by our Lord in his answer to Satan (Matt. iv. 10),—“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God;” and in his discourse with the woman of Samaria, concerning the place where, the manner in which, and the persons by whom God is acceptably worshipped. (John iv. 23, 24.)* In this opinion Dr. Smith joins.

2. It is rendered to him. This is implied, and expressed.

First.—It is implied in all those passages in which the disciples of Christ are described by the characteristic circumstance of calling on the name of Christ, calling on the name of the Lord, &c.

Rom. x. 11–13: “For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” In the fourteenth verse it is added, which proves that the reference is to Christ,—“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?”

Acts ii. 21: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Acts ix. 14: “And here,” referring to Saul, “he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.”

Acts ix. 21: “Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem?”

Acts xxii. 16: “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

* *Vide* also Rev. xxii. 8.

1 Cor. i. 2: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's."

In all these cases the verb *ἐπικαλέομαι*, we contend, means to invoke in a religious manner; so that all the passages prove the Divinity of Christ.

§ 8. Socinians sometimes deny that these passages, or the first two of them at least, refer to Christ; viz., Rom. x. 11, and Acts ii. 21. "The last words," says Mr. Yates, "are quoted from the prophecy of Joel; and they signify that every one who, in a season of distress, called upon God for assistance would be delivered from danger and affliction." We answer, that if any credit is to be given to an inspired commentator, such is not their meaning. They were obviously quoted by the apostle Peter to account for the wonders which were exhibited on the day of Pentecost. The disciples had received the remission of their sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost: the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled in them, that whosoever should call on the name of the Lord should be saved.

You have only to read the passage in the tenth chapter of Romans to be convinced that it refers to Christ. It is unnecessary, however, to argue this point at greater length, because the remaining passages are acknowledged to refer to Him. With regard to them then—

A second method is adopted to evade the argument: *ἐπικαλέομαι*, it is contended, may be used here in the middle or reciprocal sense; so that the passages may be rendered as follows. "And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that are called by thy name." "Is not this he that destroyed them who are called by

this name in Jerusalem?" "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, taking upon thyself his name." "Unto the church of God," &c., "with all that in every place are called by the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." Mr. Yates produces a list of passages from the Old Testament, in which persons are said to be called by the name of the Lord, to justify this rendering of the texts in question. It is not a little remarkable, however, that he allows, at the close of his list, that the form of expression in the Greek is in them different. This admission is evidently extorted from Mr. Yates by the force of evidence: for the passages to which he refers belong to another formula, viz. to have the name called to, or upon the object; and this is the established formula to denote the being called after or by the name of any one. Deut. xxviii. 10, which is in our version—"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah," is literally "that the name of the Lord has been called upon thee,"—*ὅτι τὸ ὄνομα Κύριοῦ ἐπικεκληται σοι*; and so of the rest: whereas the formula in the passages to which we have referred is, *ὅς ἂν ἐπικαλέσηται τὸ ὄνομα Κύριοῦ*.

On this subject Dr. Smith maintains, that the formula contended for by the Socinians occurs only when the verb is in the passive voice; that in every place of the Septuagint, where a tense of this verb in the middle voice occurs, it signifies actively; and finally, that in all the places of the New Testament in which the word occurs, under the condition specified (leaving out of consideration the controverted passages), it has the active sense. So just and evident is this acceptation, that even the editors of the Improved Version have so translated the expression in every one of those passages. They have deviated only where the exigencies of their

system required it. This will account for the language of Mr. Yates: "I have spent a whole day in examining all the passages where this word occurs; in the evening I rest from my labours, without being able to form a very decided opinion." The truth is, says his shrewd antagonist, "he was searching for what was not to be found. . . . He was seeking after other instances to support the Unitarian version of these passages. But having all day sought witnesses, and found none, he is obliged to content himself by taking up the passages themselves on the general principles of Greek grammar."*

§ 9. *Secondly*.—It is plainly expressed in a variety of passages that Divine worship was paid to Christ.

I do not dwell upon the instances of obeisance paid to Christ in his incarnate state, because it is difficult to ascertain, in many cases at least, with what intention they were rendered to him. It may be well, however, to bear in mind a remark which has been made more than once, that though the homage which was paid to him so nearly resembled Divine worship, if it were not the thing itself, that Christ, if a mere man, might have been expected to have said on such occasions, as the apostle Peter did to Cornelius, "Stand up, I myself am a man;" or as the angel to John, when he fell at his feet to worship him, "See thou do it not: worship God;" yet that he said no such thing. He accepts all the homage which is offered to him, without a hint of its impropriety, or the slightest monitory intimation of his equality in nature with the persons by whom it was paid.

These remarks, Dr. Wardlaw thinks, may be applied with peculiar force to the words of Thomas, already considered. "He answered and said unto him," says

* *Vide also Dr. Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony.* [Fourth Edition, pp. 188–200.]

the evangelist, (a decided proof that the sacred writer considered the words not a random, unmeaning exclamation, but a direct address to Christ, containing a confession of his faith,) “My Lord and my God!” (John xx. 27, 28.) “Now,” adds the Doctor, “if the words were addressed to Christ,—nay, if there was even a possibility of their being so understood,—the reasoning above will apply in all its force. A mere human prophet, faithful to the honour of the God from whom he had his commission, would have warned his mistaken follower, and all who heard him, to beware of fancying that he possessed any dignity that could entitle him to such an address. His heart would have been chilled at the very thought, and he would have been distressed till he got the warning uttered. But nothing of this kind appears. ‘Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.’”

§ 10. As instances in which it is plainly expressed that Divine worship was paid to Christ, I mention—

Acts vii. 59, 60: “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” The Being who is the object of Divine worship, who is thus invoked by the departing martyr, must be God. What can the Socinians say to this?

1. There is first a feeble attempt made to show that Christ is not the object of address, in one of the clauses at least. “With respect to the second ejaculation,” says Mr. Yates, “‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,’ it was probably addressed to God, the Judge of all, to whom the expiring saint appears previously and delibe-

rately to have diverted his attention in the solemn act of kneeling down." We answer—

First,—that so far from being probable, there is not the slightest reason to imagine that there was any change as to the object of address. Christ, as is universally admitted, was that object in the first clause. We have only to read the two in connection with each other, to be convinced that Christ is the object of address in the last.

Secondly,—that if they could prove what they rather insinuate than venture to affirm, it would not avail them. The first clause is a clear and unequivocal instance of solemn invocation addressed to Christ. One such instance is as decided a proof that Christ is the proper object of prayer as twenty. The Socinians must show that the Saviour was not invoked by Stephen at all; or they do nothing. This being found to be impossible, they venture to deny—

2. That the example of Stephen is sufficient authority to warrant the general invocation of Christ on the part of believers.

I do not now refer to those infidels, under the mask of Socinianism, who tell us (disregarding the facts that he was an apostolic Christian, a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,") that the opinion and practice of Stephen ought to form no rule for us—that Stephen may have been mistaken, and his practice corrupt. Mr. Belsham appears to be of this class. He does not hesitate to insinuate that this dying act of faith and devotion was an act of disobedience to Christ; and, I confess, I wonder that more have not followed his example, for it is the only way to relieve themselves from all perplexities. With these men I have nothing to do. They are unmasked infidels.

I allude to those who conceive of Stephen as possessing at the time he uttered these words a vision of our Lord; and argue that this address of Stephen to Jesus, when he actually saw him, does not authorize us to offer prayers to him now that he is invisible. This is the solution, or attempted solution, of the editors of the Improved Version,—and in it Unitarian expositors are very generally agreed; and upon it I make the following remarks.

First.—That there is no proof whatever of actual vision. It is said, indeed, that while he was in the council hall, he “looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right of God;” but this, as Dr. Wardlaw suggests, may not have been an actual vision of the Saviour—a vision with the bodily, but mental eye,—a vision of strong faith. The language of the historian strongly favours this opinion. “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, saw,” it is said, this vision. It was a mental vision, imparted by the powerful energy of the Spirit, with which at the time he was filled. But at any rate this vision was seen in the place of assembly. When he uttered the words we are considering, he had left the council hall; he was cast out of the city. “The vision,” say the editors of the Improved Version, after Newcome, “seems to have been reviewed for the purpose of giving this first martyr comfort and support.” This is, however, mere supposition; not a word is said about it. It is perfectly unauthorized to build the explanation of a fact, which may be most readily explained another way, on an unsupported supposition.

Secondly.—That the word “address,” introduced by the Socinian editors, “This address of Stephen to Christ when he saw him,” &c., whether intended for that pur-

pose or not, is calculated to mislead. It is not a mere address, but a solemn prayer—a prayer for the greatest of possible blessings. It cannot fail to remind us of the language of our blessed Lord, when he hung upon the cross,—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” If the language of our Lord be more than a mere address, it is impossible to doubt that that of Stephen is so too, for it possesses even more of the form of supplication than the language of our Lord just quoted.

Thirdly.—That since this is the case, we might even grant to a Socinian all that he assumes,—that Stephen, when he uttered the words we are considering, actually saw a vision of Christ—that this vision was not a mental but a bodily vision,—and still deny his conclusion; for the petition he presented would have been equally preposterous and irreligious, whether offered to a visible or an invisible being, unless that being were over all, God blessed for ever. The statements of Dr. Wardlaw are eminently worthy of our regard. “It seems passing strange that the circumstance of actual vision should be considered by any as at all altering the nature of the case. Are we to conclude then that a creature, a mere man, may, in particular circumstances, be a proper object of prayer and religious worship?—that when seen he may be prayed to, but when unseen the prayer must be withheld as idolatry? Does the mere circumstance of his being visible impart a transient Divinity, and a momentary title to the honours of Godhead,—a Divinity and a title lasting only while the vision lasts? Can visibility or invisibility change the nature of a creature, deifying for the time a mere son of man? Surely the weakness of such ground as this must be felt by every mind that

remains open to conviction" on this most important subject! I am not very fond of anything that can provoke a smile on a subject of such infinite importance; but really this reasoning of the Socinians exhibits them in a state of distress equal to that of the inhabitants of Samaria, when an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of doves' dung for five pieces of silver.*

2 Cor. xii. 8, 9: "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

A feeble attempt has been made to show that the supplication was not addressed to Christ, but the Father. "I earnestly prayed to God to be delivered from it," says Hammond. This interpretation is also adopted by Mr. Lindsey. The sacred writer, however, uses the term "Lord," not "God;" and even Mr. Yates is constrained to admit that the mention of Christ, in the latter part of the passage, seems to indicate that he was the person whom Paul besought.

Other attempts are therefore made to neutralize this passage. "The person," says Mr. Belsham, "to whom the apostle prayed was Christ, who had promised to remain with the apostles to the end of the age; who had repeatedly appeared to Paul in person or in vision; and to whom the apostle applied upon some occasion, when it is evident that his Master was sensibly present with him, for he cites the very words of our Lord's reply. But this is no warrant to others who are not indulged with

* See also Dr. P. Smith's [*Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii., pp. 228–230; vol. iii., pp. 40–47, Third Edition.]

the same privileges.”* To the same effect is the language of Priestley. “This is far from authorizing us to pray to Christ when we do not see him, and cannot know that he is present to hear us, or authorized to do anything for us if he did. It is God only—that great being who is styled the God and Father of Jesus Christ, and to whom he always prayed—that is the proper object of our prayers.” To this we reply—

First,—that it takes for granted what we have shown to be unfounded, viz. that Christ thus appeared to the apostles after his ascension into heaven; and,

Secondly,—that if it were admitted, it would not rescue the apostle from the charge of idolatry, according to our reasonings upon the former text. It is wonderful Dr. Priestley should not have seen this. If the Father is the only proper object of our prayers, the Son cannot be the proper object. Whether he be present visibly and tangibly, or present by vision, or not present at all, is nothing to the purpose; if he is not one with the Father, he never can be, in any circumstances, the object of prayer. There never was a more imbecile attempt to reconcile any passage to the Socinian dogmas than this. Mr. Yates is so completely ashamed of it, that he does not once allude to it. It is worthy of notice, that he makes no attempt to repel the evidence of this passage; but frankly acknowledges that he cannot reconcile completely to his own satisfaction these two instances of the invocation of Jesus, with those numerous and clear directions which represent the Father as the only proper object of religious adoration.† Would to God that he might be brought to know and to acknowledge the only reconciling principle, that Christ and the Father are one!

§ 11. The preceding passages contain instances of the

* *Calm Inquiry*, p. 374.

† Page 229.

invocation of Christ when he is the exclusive object of address: these are cases in which he is joined with the Father, and Divine worship is paid to him in common with the latter.

1 Thess. iii. 11-13: "Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you. To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

2 Thess. ii. 16, 17: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

These words contain a solemn invocation, of which the Father and the Son are the joint objects. In the first of the verses Christ is represented, in connection with the Father, as the disposer of providential events; in the remaining verses, he is addressed in one instance alone, and in the other along with the Father, as the author and finisher of all Christian graces in the hearts of his people. If Christ were not God, how could it be lawful to pray to him to establish our hearts unblameable in holiness? The blessings supplicated are such as only God can bestow.

Objection the First.—The passages before us do not contain an invocation either of God or of Christ, but a devout wish of aid and direction from them.

Answer.—This is mere trifling. We do not look for direct addresses to the object of supplication in a letter. What is here expressed by the apostle in the form of a

wish is, beyond all reasonable question, a supplicatory aspiration to the throne of Divine grace. The blessings desired are such, as we have seen, as it belongs to God alone to bestow; and they are desired alike from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Objection the Second.—The editors of the Improved Version tell us that the apostle, in his missionary labours, was under the immediate direction of Christ, who occasionally appeared to him for his guidance and encouragement. They seem to have imagined—though it is difficult to tell what was their meaning—that the words contain a *wish* that Christ would appear to the apostle personally, and send him by verbal direction to the Thessalonians.

Answer 1.—This supposition of an occasional personal appearance of Christ to the apostles has been shown to be unfounded.

Answer 2.—The notion that the words are the expression of a wish merely, and contain no invocation either of God or Christ, has been disproved.

Answer 3.—If the words exhibited only a wish, it would still have relation to both the Father and the Son. It desires that God, as well as Christ, would direct his way, &c.; and there is nothing in the passage to lead us to suppose that the apostle expressed or wished that God would direct them in one manner, and the Saviour in another.

Answer 4.—The passage is not merely a supplicatory aspiration, in the form of a wish, that his way might be directed to Thessalonica; but that Christ, in connection with the Father, would cause them to abound in every Christian grace: and this is language which the supposition of the occasional appearance of Christ does not tend in the slightest degree to explain.

§ 12. The forms of benediction, with which the epistles generally commence or conclude, are in effect prayers presented to the Beings whose names they introduce; *e. g.*—

Rom. i. 7: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (*Vide* also 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3.)

“From this view of the apostolic benedictions,” says Mr. Yates, “I am not disposed to dissent. Properly speaking, they imply only benevolent wishes for happiness, mutual love, and all temporal and spiritual blessings, to be bestowed by God and Jesus upon the persons addressed. But, as almost every wish of an habitually pious man includes a prayer, they may also be considered as aspirations of the mind to God, who is the object of prayer.” One would think this admission must settle the point in controversy. If these benedictions are allowed to be prayers,—if they are presented to Christ, as well as to the Father,—the former must surely be God. No: Mr. Yates will not allow this. “It is to be observed,” he adds, “that in every instance of such benediction, a marked distinction is made between God the Father, who is the only true God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who exercises his functions as the guardian and benefactor of the Christian church in subjection to God, and by means of qualifications imparted by him.”

I would reply, that a distinction is no doubt made between God the Father and Christ; but not such a distinction as implies the essential and infinite inferiority of the latter. The logical conclusion is, that though distinct, the beings denominated the Father and Christ are equal in power and glory. Both are the objects of invocation. The blessings implored from both are

the same; and they are blessings which God only can bestow.

§ 13. The last passage I notice is Rev. v. 6–14. The evidence supplied by this passage is so overpowering that one should think it must convince all. Mr. Yates however says, that the inferiority of Christ being expressed in the vision, the language of the worshipping multitudes must be understood agreeably to this inferiority,—that the worship paid to Christ must be conceived to be such as may be rendered, without sin, to a human being. He appeals to 1 Chron. xxix. 20, in support of his view: “And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the King.” We reply, the cases are not parallel. Our argument does not rest merely on the Lamb being *associated* with God, but on the fact of the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders *falling down before him*, and making him almost the exclusive and chief object of regard and worship. “*And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders FELL DOWN BEFORE THE LAMB, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sung a new song, saying, THOU ART WORTHY TO TAKE THE BOOK, AND TO OPEN THE SEALS THEREOF: FOR THOU WAST SLAIN, AND HAST REDEEMED US TO GOD BY THY BLOOD OUT OF EVERY KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, AND NATION; AND HAST MADE US UNTO OUR GOD KINGS AND PRIESTS: AND*

WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING. AND EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, AND ON THE EARTH, AND UNDER THE EARTH, AND SUCH AS ARE IN THE SEA, AND ALL THAT ARE IN THEM, HEARD I SAYING, BLESSING, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND POWER, BE UNTO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB FOR EVER AND EVER. And the four living creatures said, AMEN. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever." Is THIS *inferior* homage? Can evidence be more complete, and proof more conclusive, than what has been adduced in the discussion now closed?

LECTURE IX.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS WORK.

The subject of the preceding lectures:—a summary of the work of Christ:—the titles Saviour and Redeemer:—the term Mediator, definition of:—the posture of affairs between God and man:—the mediatorial work of Christ, what included in:—the prophetical office:—unfold-
ing the will of God:—the necessity under which Christ was laid to assume the office of a Prophet.

THE WORK OF THE REDEEMER.

§ 1. HAVING concluded what I thought it necessary for me to say on the PERSON of the Redeemer, as IMMANUEL, *God with us*, I proceed to describe briefly his WORK in the following lectures. The preceding discussion, though in a sense lengthened, is to be looked upon however in the light of a sample only. The various standard works, to which I have so often referred you, and from which I have so often quoted, and mostly with approbation, will supply you with all the information you will need to supplement what I have said.

In a general classification of the doctrines of our holy religion, they may be arranged into four divisions; viz.—those which relate to God, his existence and per-

fections,—those which relate to man in his present fallen state,—those which relate to the Redeemer,—and those which describe the consequences of his interposition on behalf of the guilty. Those doctrines which relate to the Saviour comprehend two classes: the first descriptive of his *person*, as we have seen; and the second of his *work*,—to a particular examination of which we now proceed.

In the prosecution of our inquiries, the most important doctrines of the sacred volume place us often in contact, or rather in collision, with the more prominent of those various sects who oppose what we cannot but deem *the truth* as it is in Jesus. Our views on the work of Christ cannot be fully and advantageously unfolded without a reference, for instance, to the errors of the Socinians, who deny *that kind of reality*, at least, which we believe to belong to it; and who avow that there was no necessity for an atonement at all. It is my earnest hope that, while we do not forget the importance to us of correct sentiments upon these subjects, in a professional point of view, we may prayerfully feel, as we proceed in our investigations, that they relate not to points of mere speculation, but to such as involve, on the contrary, our interests during the whole extent of our being.

§ 2. The work of Christ is summarily, but yet sufficiently described in various passages of Scripture. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. That will was the sanctification of his people—or, as the passage evidently means, their purification from legal pollution, *i. e.* their deliverance from guilt; and this sanctification was effected through the offering of the body of Christ once for all. “He came,” we are assured, “to seek and to save that which was lost.”

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." So that, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

§ 3. The titles Saviour and Redeemer, by which our blessed Lord is designated, are descriptive of his work. But perhaps the name Mediator is the most comprehensive epithet that is applied to him. It includes what he did on earth, and what he is doing in heaven in relation to man. He made his entrance into this world in the character of Mediator,—he suffered on the cross as Mediator,—as Mediator he ascended up on high, and took his station on the throne of universal empire,—and in the same character will he declare the eternal destinies of men, at the great and solemn day of account.

§ 4. A mediator (*μέσος εἰπει*), as the word imports, is one who interposes his good offices between two or more parties at variance, with a view to repair the bond of amity which had been broken. The office of mediator necessarily supposes the existence of at least two parties, —a mediator is not a mediator of one. It further supposes that a break has taken place between these parties, for a mediator is not a mediator of those who are as one. The restoration of union is the exclusive object at which the mediator aims; so that where any parties are in a state of amity, there is not only no need, but no room for the exercise of the office we are now considering.

§ 5. The actual posture of affairs between God and man required the interposition of a mediator. The human race, as we have seen, had revolted from him, their Moral Governor and rightful Sovereign: they had broken his law,—a law which, being perfect, deserves perfect obedience, and demands it under the awful penalty of death, and interminable misery after death, if even one of its precepts should be violated. The sin of man had rendered Jehovah, as a perfect and holy moral governor, an enemy to man; and a sense of guilt, conjoined with the opposition of the Divine character and law to all the strong and cherished propensities of his nature, had rendered man an enemy to God. A mediator between God and man became accordingly indispensable. Jehovah could not lay aside the sword of justice: man would not relinquish those practices which exposed him to the severest inflictions of its vengeance. Without a daysman then between God and his apostate subjects, their mutual alienation and opposition must have been irremediable and eternal.

We bless the second person of the adorable Trinity, that he graciously interposed between the parties whom sin had set so irreconcileably at variance; and our business now is to exhibit the re-union which he effected between them, or rather to point out the means by which it was accomplished.

§ 6. The mediatorial work of Christ includes, then, all those steps in the glorious career of Divine mercy by which the gracious purposes of the great Eternal towards our apostate world are accomplished, and which will rescue a multitude which no man can number from the curse and contamination of sin, and bring them to partake and to retain the image of the Divine purity and blessedness throughout the ages of eternity.

To secure this ultimate and infinitely important object was a work of paramount and of unspeakable difficulty. There was much to do in reference both to God and man; and hence originate the various offices which the Saviour sustains,—to which the names of Prophet, Priest, and King have been given, and each of which designates one particular branch of the mediatorial work. In regard to God, there were to be removed those obstacles—arising from his public character as the head of a great system of moral government—which seemed totally to preclude the bestowment of any favour upon rebels. The whole human race had exposed themselves to the inflictions of his wrath: their conduct had been such as to give them no claim upon God—to impart to them no desert but the desert of suffering; and since equity demands that, under a system of moral government, each subject receives his desert, whether it be reward or punishment, there appears to have been an obstacle—and there really was an obstacle—to the manifestation of mercy to men, which no depth of wisdom, save that which being infinite is unfathomable, could have devised the means of removing. The previously affirmed perfection of that law which constitutes one of the grand instruments of moral government would have been practically denied by the Lawgiver himself. His justice would have been compromised, and thereby the safety of his government endangered, if pardon had been bestowed upon the transgressor by a mere act of sovereignty on the part of God. It was obviously necessary for something to be done by which the honour of the Divine law would be vindicated, the rectitude of the Divine character exhibited, and the safety of the Divine government secured, when the arm of compassion and mercy was extended to the guilty; and in reference to

God, this was the precise work which the Saviour came to accomplish.

In regard to man, there needed to be removed that antipathy against the Divine character, constituting the essence of that spiritual disease which cleaves to him by nature; which, had it remained, although a provision had been made on the part of God for re-admitting the transgressor to his presence and favour, would have prevented the re-establishment of union and amity, and rendered the pardon of the gospel a thing of comparatively no value. Suppose that the provision to which I just referred had been made for the pardon of the guilty,—yet they must necessarily have remained ignorant of it, without a distinct revelation from God; and suppose further, that such a revelation had been imparted,—yet they would certainly have rejected the proffered blessing, unless means had been employed to overturn the enmity and pride of their hearts, and thus to lead them to implore mercy on the ground on which alone Jehovah can impart it. In reference to man, therefore, this was the very work which the Saviour came to perform. To sum up all in a word or two, he undertook as Mediator to do that which would enable the great Eternal, on the one hand, in his public character, to issue proposals of peace to those who were in rebellion; and that would, on the other hand, certainly lead many, at least, of the latter as penitent suppliants to his throne of grace, imploring that mercy which the almighty and gracious Being who occupies it has promised to bestow.

In the accomplishment of this work he became, as we have said, the Prophet, Priest, and King of his church. The assumption of this threefold office, as it has been frequently observed, was rendered necessary by a variety of considerations, especially by the condition

to which man had reduced himself, and the varied blessings which he needed as the natural and necessary consequence. He had sunk into a state of ignorance, of guilt, and of servitude to sin. He needed therefore, as the old divines say, to have salvation announced to him, obtained for him, and applied to his conscience and his heart. The threefold office of Christ meets and answers to this threefold state of wretchedness: for, as Turretine says in substance, our ignorance is dispelled by Christ as a Prophet; our guilt is removed by him as a Priest; our deliverance from the tyranny and corruption of sin is effected by him as a King. The Prophetic Light scatters the darkness of error; the merit of the Priest bears away the guilt of sin; the power of the King rescues us from the slavery of sin and of death. “*Propheta ostendit nobis Deum, Sacerdos adducit nos ad Deum, et Rex conjungit et glorificat cum Deo. Propheta Spiritu illuminationis intellectum illustrat, Sacerdos Spiritu consolationis tranquillat cor et conscientiam, Rex Spiritu sanctificationis rebellantes affectus domat.*”* It is more fanciful in this writer when he proceeds to say, that “this threefold office of Christ is betokened by the three leading Divine attributes; viz. wisdom, mercy, and power: for the Son reveals to us the wisdom of God as a Prophet; he confers his mercy upon us as a Priest; and draws forth his power to deliver and save us as our King.”

I now proceed to direct your contemplations to the Son of God in each of these characters, with the view

* “The Prophet reveals God to us, the Priest leads us to Him, and the King unites us to God and glorifies us with Him. The Prophet enlightens the mind by the Spirit of illumination, the Priest soothes the heart and conscience by the Spirit of consolation, and the King subdues the rebellious affections by the Spirit of holiness.”

of exhibiting more fully that great work which he undertook and accomplished on behalf of the human race. We shall first contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ in his

PROPHETICAL OFFICE OR CHARACTER.

§ 7. With the general nature of this office we are all sufficiently acquainted. I shall endeavour immediately to explain it more minutely; in the meantime, it may be desirable to show that he really sustained the prophetic character. While the disciples were journeying to Emmaus, their risen Lord joined himself to them; and they, regarding him as a stranger, began to relate to him the things which had so recently happened concerning Jesus of Nazareth, whom they designated as a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. (Luke xxiv. 13–19.) It is not enough, however, to say that Christ was a prophet: he was *the* prophet whom God, in compassion to the infirmities of the Jews, who could not endure to hear again the voice of Jehovah, promised to send into the world. “They have well spoken,” said the Lord, “that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” (Deut. xviii. 17–19.) Did these words point to Christ? Was he the prophet to which they refer? No one doubts, or can doubt, that they were written previously to the birth of Christ: the only question that can be put is, whether they received their complete and appropriate accomplishment in him. Now in order to obtain satis-

faction on this point, it may be well to remember that they obviously point to one individual only. The Jews are in the habit of representing them as pointing to a succession of prophets that were to arise in Israel. It is manifest, however, that they were adapted to encourage the expectation of one prophet of distinguished eminence. "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth," &c. Joshua was a man greatly distinguished in the Jewish history; but he was not that prophet, nor even a prophet at all: and the Jewish church after the death of Joshua affixed their testimony to the end of the Book of Deuteronomy in support of this negation. He was, say they, "full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. But there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." Some indeed suppose that these words were added, not by the Jewish church soon after the decease of Joshua, but by Ezra many centuries after; in which case they would prove that the prophet marked out in the prediction did not arise till after the captivity. It is not of any importance to prove this, however. The prophet referred to had not arisen previously to the time of our Lord, in the judgment of the Jewish church; for the Sanhedrim sent messengers to John the Baptist on one occasion to inquire whether he were *that* prophet, manifestly referring to the one whom the language of God to Moses had led them to expect. And when Christ appeared, he was so obviously like to Moses, or rather superior to him in the gifts of knowledge and of power, that the people could not restrain the expression of their opinion that he was "*that* prophet that should come

into the world." The apostle Peter, however, by expressly applying the language of God to the fathers of the Jewish nation to Christ, sets the question completely at rest, with all who admit him to have been an infallible interpreter of Old Testament prophecy.* All I should wish to say on the subject of the prophetic office of Christ may be comprehended under the three following particulars. We shall consider more particularly, in the first place, the nature of the office; secondly, the necessity under which he was laid to assume it; and thirdly, the manner in which he discharged its duties.

§ 8. FIRST.—The nature of Christ's work as the great prophet of the church consisted, we are told, of three parts. He had to explain the law—to preach the gospel—and to predict future events. All may, however, be comprehended under the general statement, that in the character under which we now consider him, he brought an authorized unerring statement and perfect discovery of all that Jehovah deemed it meet to communicate to men in reference to subjects which involve their interests, both in this world and in that which is to come: he unfolded the relations in which men stand to God and to each other—the obligations and duties which grow out of these relations: he exhibited the deplorable condition to which the whole family of man have reduced themselves by their violation of duty—and the only way by which they can avoid the consequences of their transgression, and become partakers of the purity and blessedness of the world above. He declared to the church generally, and to its individual members in particular, the troubles they must expect to endure before their removal to that world where affliction will be an eternal stranger. These remarks on the prophetic office of

* See Acts iii. 22.

Christ will tend to show the distinction which exists between him and others to whom the general name prophet may be applied. Christian ministers may be denominated prophets, because they unfold the will of God to men. But while Christ brings a direct communication from the great Eternal to us, ordinary ministers only explain to the best of their ability the meaning of that communication: they are expositors of the words of the prophet; and not, correctly speaking, prophets themselves.

Between ordinary prophets also, in the proper acceptance of that term, and our blessed Lord, there is a broad line of distinction. For though it cannot be said of them, that they were the mere expositors of Divine communications, though they were themselves the bearers of such communications,—so that in this point of view there is no difference between them and the great prophet, who declares that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him—that his doctrine was not his, but the doctrine of him from whom he had received his commission; yet, since he was immediately commissioned by the Father, and they immediately through him, he has even in this point of view the pre-eminence. When the twelve went forth to cast out devils, and to heal sicknesses and diseases, they received their authority and their power from Christ. When he had called them unto him, he gave them power over unclean spirits, and said, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.”* And when at length, in consequence of that propitiation which was presented to God for the sins of the whole world, their missionary enterprise was to be extended far beyond the boundaries of Judea, it was by him they were sent forth on the errand

* Matt. x. 16.

of mercy. He came unto them, and said, “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”* In harmony with these statements, we find the wonders which were effected on the day of Pentecost ascribed to the Spirit, which the Saviour had poured forth.† “ In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” said Peter to the lame man in Solomon’s porch, “ rise up and walk;” and when the multitudes looked on them with wonder and amazement,—“ Why marvel ye at this?” said Peter, “ or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?”‡ The name of him whom ye slew, but whom God hath glorified, “ through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know.”

Thus the statements just made exhibit a broad line of distinction between Christ and ordinary prophets, even in the proper acceptation of the term. There remains, however, something more to be noticed. Christ is indeed, by office as Mediator, to be considered as inferior to the Father, as having communicated, in his prophetical character, only that precise measure of information which he was appointed by the Father to convey; yet we are not to conceive of him as having himself received the knowledge which his words are the means of imparting to us. When the apostles of old, on the other hand, deputed by Christ, went forth to preach the gospel to the whole world, they not only kept within the boundaries of their instructions, when they attempted to teach their fellow men; but these instructions were the source of all

* Matt. xxviii. 18–20.

† Acts ii. 16.

‡ Acts iii. 12.

the knowledge they themselves possessed in relation to the subjects to which they called the attention of their hearers. Nay, of some of the ancient prophets it may be said, that they had no—or at any rate an imperfect—knowledge of the subjects of their communications; they sought “what the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow;”* they transmitted the rays which they received from Christ—the exclusive source of light to us, but they remained unilluminated by them themselves. But since Christ was God, knowledge could no more be communicated to him than power. His doctrine, like that of the apostles, was not his own, in so far as it regards the authority by which it was brought before the view of men; but it was his own, inasmuch as the light which it conveyed to them dwelt in him essentially as one of the adorable subsistents in the ever blessed Trinity. It is, I think, solely by the aid of the distinction which I have now endeavoured to exhibit that we can explain the conduct of Christ in commanding the apostles to preach the gospel; and generally speaking, in appointing everything under the Christian dispensation to be done in his name. The language of our Lord would appear to me to lack modesty—to approach too near the style of Deity, on any assumption but that to which I have referred,—viz. that official right having been obtained by the act of pouring out his soul unto death, he was now at liberty to pour forth all the treasures of wisdom which he possessed, as the God-man Mediator, for the benefit of those whose salvation he came to secure.

§ 9. SECONDLY.—The necessity under which Christ was laid to assume the prophetical office or character.

* 1 Peter i. 11.

That necessity entirely results from the inability of men to attain, without supernatural means, all that knowledge of their state and character—of God—of the way of salvation, and of the important realities of eternity, which it was necessary, in the view of Jehovah, for them to possess. “There can be no knowledge of God,” says Turretine, “and of Divine things, without revelation, because the animal or carnal man does not receive the things which are of God; and no revelation of salvation can be given except through Christ.” This statement is not perfectly accurate, but it is sufficiently so for general purposes. The reason assigned by Turretine for the necessity of a Divine revelation supplies, perhaps, rather a reason for the necessity of a Divine teaching to understand and receive a revelation previously bestowed: yet it shows indirectly the necessity which existed for a Divine revelation; for if men, without Divine teaching, will not receive those discoveries of the Divine character which the Scriptures present, *a fortiori* they would not have attained to them had the Scriptures never been given. When Turretine says, there can be no knowledge of God without revelation, it is necessary to inquire how the words are to be understood. He evidently means a supernatural revelation, as it is generally called—whether properly so or not I do not now stop to inquire; *i. e.* a discovery of the Divine character beyond and above that which is, in point of fact, derived from the works of nature. Without such a revelation, there can be, he affirms, no knowledge of God; and hence he infers the necessity of the prophetic office of Christ. His assertion is then too general, because there was knowledge of God in Paradise before the fall, derived from the discoveries which Jehovah has made of himself in his works.

If the language of Turretine be regarded as referring

to man since the fall, it is possibly correct; certainly so, I am disposed to add, if only the word *will* be substituted in place of the word *can*. There will be no knowledge of God, I grant, without such a revelation as he intends. I do not, I acknowledge, like the phraseology, “There *can* be no knowledge of God and Divine things;” inasmuch as it is, to say the least of it, not adapted to show that it is the fault of man that he is ignorant of God. Since the invisible things of God are clearly manifested by the works of creation—since he has given to us powers to recognise the proofs of his being, and the perfections of his character, it never can be said with truth, but in that secondary sense of the phraseology which Hinton has so well illustrated in his little work on Theology, that there *can* be no knowledge of God without revelation. That there *will* be none, however, is manifest. Men lost the knowledge of God which they once possessed: how then should it be supposed that they will recover what they could not, *i. e.* would not retain? For the state of ignorance into which they sunk resulted from a voluntary extinction of the light; they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; they withdrew from the blaze of that holiness which they did not dare steadily to contemplate: and the same principles which led them to retire into the darkness of paganism will ever operate to keep them in it; so that it may be said, as a general description of man, “The world by wisdom knows not God.”

Contemplating man then as a fallen being, it was obviously necessary for the Lord Jesus to assume the prophetical office, in order to the accomplishment of the great work of mediation. He undertook to save his people, and thus to promote the glory of God; but there can be no salvation without the knowledge of God, for

to be saved is—partly at least—to be made to know God. There will again be no knowledge of God without a revelation of the kind to which Turretine refers; and there will be no such revelation unless Christ assumes the prophetical office and character. He came accordingly to unfold to men the character of Jehovah—his unspotted holiness, inviolable truth, perfect justice; to exhibit the nature and extent and rectitude of the law which they have transgressed—the vengeance to which they have exposed themselves by sin, and the way of escape provided by the grace of their offended Sovereign. It may also be correct, perhaps, to represent the knowledge which Adam possessed in innocence as conveyed to him by Christ, in his prophetical office and character. I mean not that Adam needed, as we do, Divine power to influence his heart, and to dispose him to contemplate the manifestations of the Divine perfections which were to be seen in the works of creation; but that even these proofs of the glory of God were set before his eyes by Christ. It was by Christ that Adam was created—by Christ that the heavens and the earth were formed—by Christ as Mediator: and therefore Christ may have exercised his prophetical office even in the garden of Eden itself; but on this I do not insist.

LECTURE X.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS PROPHETICAL OFFICE.

The manner, at three distinct periods, in which he performed the duties of:—*first*, under the old dispensation, by delegation:—the reasons why:—*secondly*, the discharge of its duties under the Christian dispensation:—distinguished by fidelity:—by simplicity and plainness:—modesty and bold decision:—ardent affection:—abstract of Dr. Dwight's views why our Lord assumed the office of a preacher:—review of, and their defect pointed out:—*thirdly*, the manner these prophetic duties were discharged after the decease he accomplished at Jerusalem:—why the plan of delegation was again resumed.

PROPHETICAL OFFICE OF CHRIST.

§ 1. THIRDLY.—We proceed to point out the manner in which Christ performed the duties involved in this office. To him was entrusted, as we have seen, by a direct commission from the Father, the great work of revealing to men all that was essential to their interests in this world and in the world to come. Full official authority was conferred upon him to make that revelation, in the way that should appear to him best calculated to secure the ends for which the office was assumed. In the exercise of this plenary power, he determined to make this revelation personally, and by

delegation. We may therefore contemplate him discharging the office of a prophet at three distinct periods,—under the former economy—at the introduction of the Christian dispensation—and after the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem.

§ 2. *First.*—Let us observe the manner in which Christ performed the duties involved in the prophetical office under the old economy. It was then by delegation —by the mouth of the ancient prophets, who were inspired by him to proclaim the Divine will to men, and whose pens were afterwards guided to give perpetuity to the revelations they made by committing them to writing. Since the fall of man, it is manifest that there can be no communication of spiritual blessings to men but through a Mediator; and as it is one branch of the mediatorial office to recover man from a state of ignorance, as well as a state of guilt, it is manifestly impossible that there can have been any communication of spiritual light to the world which was not made either meditately or immediately by Christ. Hence we are to regard the ancient prophets as not merely possessed of a Divine commission, but as having received that commission from Christ. The institutions of Moses are, in this point of view, the institutions of Christ. It was Christ that appeared to him in the burning bush—that gave him his commission to the Israelites, and to Pharaoh—that promised to be with his mouth, and to teach him what he should say. It was Christ that brought all those terrible judgments upon Egypt (as he had formerly rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah), and which led to the emancipation of his chosen people from bondage. It was Christ who went with the hosts of Israel through the wilderness, in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. It was

Christ that inspired Moses to make so ample a revelation of the Divine character and will, and to exhibit so clear a manifestation of his salvation as that which appears in his institutes; and every addition that was made by subsequent prophets to the means which Old Testament saints enjoyed of knowing God, and of being made to rejoice in his salvation, is to be traced ultimately to Christ, as the great prophet of the church. It was the Spirit of Christ that was in them, as we learn from infallible authority, that did lead them to minister—comparatively obscurely indeed—the things which have been clearly reported unto us by those who have preached the gospel unto us, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Thus Moses and David, and Jeremiah and Isaiah, not only spake of him, but by him. They received all their communications from him. No light has beamed upon our world which did not proceed from the Sun of Righteousness, and in the exercise of that branch of the mediatorial work which we are now considering.

You are well aware, that in the opinion of many—an opinion which is, I apprehend, a well-founded one—all the Divine appearances which the sacred volume records as having anciently been exhibited were appearances of the Eternal Word, taking temporarily upon him some visible form before he permanently assumed our nature, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. Such, I apprehend, is the true account of the narrative concerning Hagar. (Gen. xvi.) An angel, it is said, indeed appeared to her; but the term angel is not descriptive of the nature of any being, but of his office. And that it was not a created angel is manifest from the language of his address to her. He promised what God only could do, and foretels what God only can know,—“*I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not*

be numbered for multitude." It is further manifest, from the names which Hagar gave to him, and the consequent Divine worship she paid to him. "She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." Similar remarks may be made with reference to the being who appeared to Abraham. (Gen. xvii., xviii.) But I cannot, for obvious reasons, enlarge. I would merely observe, that if these appearances were Divine appearances, of which I see no sufficient reason to doubt, they must have been appearances of the Son, not the Father; for "no man hath seen God"—*i. e.* the Father—"at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Jehovah himself says, "There shall no man see me, and live." It was Christ then, the only Mediator between God and man—the great prophet by whom, either meditately or immediately, all Divine communications are made to the world—that revealed himself to Hagar and Abraham on the occasions referred to.

§ 3. But since it consisted with the purposes of Deity that Christ should personally assume the office of prophet, why was the office performed by delegation, it may be asked, in the earlier history of the world? Why did not the Son of God clothe himself with our nature immediately after the fall, and reveal the divinely instituted method of salvation in that full and perfect manner which distinguishes the revelations of gospel time? Why was so long a moral twilight allowed to remain, before the Sun of Righteousness distinctly rose above the horizon, and poured the splendour of his beams over the face of this moral waste? I answer—

(*First*),—that we should not expect to be able fully to comprehend the reasons of the Divine procedure. No wisdom short of that which is perfect can fathom the

purposes of an infinite mind. To a certain point, indeed, taking all the aid which Divine revelation affords, we may advance in our conjectures upon this subject; but it is impossible for us to find out the Almighty to perfection.

(Secondly).—We reply that, as far as we are able to judge, the general design of the delay which took place in reference to the mission of the Son of God, was to afford opportunity for the accumulation of a mass of evidence in support of his character and claims, which might be employed with great effect in a grand effort to bring the world generally to the obedience of faith. The government which God exercises over intelligent beings is of a moral nature. He rules them through the instrumentality of inducements addressed to the understanding and the affections. He brings men to the Saviour, and leads them to submit to his authority, by the power of that evidence which establishes his claims to be the Son of God; for though, doubtless, another species of influence is necessary, and actually put forth, yet that influence is exerted to lead them to a spiritual discernment of the nature of that evidence by which the desired change in their affections and conduct must be directly produced. Now it is manifest, that we are gainers in this respect by the delay which took place in the mission of Christ. Far be it from me to insinuate that it would have been impossible for Jehovah sufficiently to accredit the mediatorial office and character of his Son, had he appeared personally as the Saviour of men immediately after the fall; yet it is undeniable that the truth of his official character would not have rested on so broad and solid a basis as it does at present, if his advent had not been delayed till the fulness of the time. To the success of his own personal labours, and that of his ap-

tles, in establishing the Divine authority of that religion by which men can alone be saved from depravity as well as guilt, it seems necessary that measures should be taken to cherish a general expectation of his advent, and to mark him out as that great Being in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Such we, at any rate, know was the effect of the delay of his advent. The Jewish prophecies diffused not only among that people, but throughout a considerable part of the world, an expectation that some wonderful Being—some mighty Conqueror would arise when he made his appearance; while these prophecies described his person, and work, and character, the place and circumstances of his birth, together with the manner of his death, so particularly and minutely, that no honest inquirer after the truth can doubt that Jesus was the Christ—the divinely appointed Mediator—the Being who alone can secure to us deliverance from guilt and condemnation. Think how firmly the predictions of Moses and the prophets—the rights and ceremonies of the law, all manifestly containing a reference to something beyond themselves—the language and the experience of the Old Testament saints,—how firmly they tended to plant the tree of Christianity in our fallen world, and to render it certain that all nations should ultimately partake of its fruit! Think how powerful an instrument is put into the hands of the ministers of Christ in the present day, by the accumulated proof which the delay of the Saviour's advent has given that the gospel is not a cunningly devised fable! and you will be convinced that the wisdom of God may be traced in this, as well as in every other dispensation of his adorable providence.

And then it is to be remembered, that while the length of time which elapsed before our Lord personally

appeared as a prophet contributed, on the one hand, to show that he was the divinely appointed Saviour from sin and guilt, it tended, on the other, to render it manifest that there was and would be no other deliverer. "The world by wisdom knew not God." It is of vast importance to have this practical proof of the imbecility of the human mind in relation to the things of God. Everything that tends to show that the gospel is the only remedy for the spiritual diseases of men must tend manifestly to prepare the human mind generally for its reception. We have then, in consequence of the period fixed upon for the advent of the Saviour, the experience of 4000 years in proof of the assertion that nothing can dispel the darkness and conquer the depravity of the human mind, but the gospel of Christ. The prescriptions of orators, statesmen, poets, and philosophers, were utterly useless. When all these means after long trial had failed, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." We repose confidence in any medicine which eradicates the disease for which it was administered; but if that medicine has succeeded after the failure of every other, we add esteem to confidence, and prize it as a blessing to be guarded with the most anxious care.

§ 4. *Secondly.*—Let us contemplate the manner in which the Saviour discharged the duties involved in the prophetic office, at the introduction of the Christian dispensation. It was as much in harmony with the Divine purpose, that our blessed Lord should appear personally in the character of a prophet, as that for a season he should discharge its duties by delegation. Hence "God, who at sundry times and diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," did "in these last days speak unto" the world "by his Son."

The personal discharge, and for a considerable time, of the duties of the prophetical office, rendered it necessary for the Eternal Word to take upon him our nature, and sojourn among us. As a Divine person, he is not an object of vision; nor, unless he had thrown the covering of humanity over the glories of Divinity, would it have been possible for those who needed to receive instruction from him to have approached habitually the symbols of his sacred presence, without the highest degree of reverence and awe. The Word was accordingly made flesh, and dwelt among us. A body was prepared for him, and for this purpose; for though I am well aware that other considerations rendered it necessary for him to become incarnate, it should not, I apprehend, be forgotten that it was essential to the discharge of his prophetical office. And in what manner did he discharge its duties? This is an inquiry from which we may derive much practical instruction; for in all respects he has left us an ensample, that we should follow his steps.

§ 5. (*First*).—As the great prophet, Christ was distinguished by fidelity. I mean official fidelity. This is distinctly affirmed.* He was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house, making everything when he erected the tabernacle according to the pattern which had been shown to him in the mount. All the communications which Christ made to the world were such as he had been divinely commissioned to make. His doctrine in this point of view was not his own, but that of the great Being who sent him. He did not reveal a single truth, he did not enforce a single duty, he did not issue a single promise, which the instructions he had received did not authorize. How important, and indeed essential, is the recollection of

* Heb. iii. 2.

our Lord's official fidelity to the exercise of unwavering confidence in him! An ambassador from the more powerful of two nations engaged in deadly contest announces, to the party against whom the fortune of war appears to be turning, that on certain conditions the victorious army will refrain from attempting to push its conquests any further. The announcement is confided in,—the dispirited warriors gladly throw aside their arms, when they find to their dismay that the ambassador had exceeded his powers, and that the torrent of war is rolling on towards them, while they are less able to resist it than formerly. The great prophet did not exceed his commission — he did not go beyond his powers, when in the name of Jehovah he proclaimed mercy to all who should believe in him. Christians, and Christian ministers especially, should learn from hence the necessity of official fidelity — of adhering rigidly to their instructions — of exhibiting the council of God, the whole council of God, and nothing but the council of God to their hearers — of renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commanding themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

§ 6. (*Secondly*).—Christ, in the discharge of the duties of a prophet, was distinguished by the simplicity and plainness of his mode of address. It is a distinguishing feature of Christianity — a circumstance which tends to evince its Divine origin — that it did not despise and disregard the poor. All the celebrated philosophers of antiquity appear to have regarded them as utterly beneath their notice; but the gospel was preached to the poor, and therefore the style and manner of its communications were such as to adapt it to their cases and

attainments. He who commanded his apostle not to study excellency of speech — not to speak in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, would not, we may be certain, adopt a different style of communication himself. Accordingly we find that the characteristics to which I have referred eminently distinguished his public teaching. “ His discourses, though fraught with doctrines of the most profound and wonderful wisdom, and sentiments of the highest sublimity and beauty, appear still as if neither the words nor the thoughts were the result of the least study, but sprang up spontaneously in his mind, and flowed from his tongue in a sense instinctively, in a manner strongly resembling that of children.” * There were no learned and technical terms in our Lord's addresses: his language was suited to all men; the best language for philosophers themselves, the only language for other men. Dwight refers to the allusions, and illustrations, and parables of our Lord, in proof of the plainness by which his public instructions were distinguished. I need not say that in this respect also Christ has left us an ensample, that we should follow his steps.

§ 7. (*Thirdly*).—Our Lord exhibited a singular combination of modesty, decision, and boldness, in the discharge of the duties of the prophetical office. To preserve the middle point between these extremes is a point of great difficulty. Decision and boldness, not modified by humility and modesty, are apt to degenerate into dogmatism; and the former qualities, not strengthened by the latter, may lead to a weak, if not a partial and mutilated statement of truth. The discourses of our Lord exhibited the opposite qualities to which we now refer, and displayed them with unrivalled lustre. No

* Dwight's *Theology*, Sermon XLVI.

resemblance of boasting can be found in all his sermons. Never did, I need not say, a proud or a vain thought, but even the most distant appearance of such a thought, escape from his lips. And yet, when occasion required it, he was not less bold and authoritative than modest and gentle. Think of his intrepid and uncompromising attacks upon the Sadducees and Pharisees, who at that time held the whole power of the Jewish government, and the whole influence over the Jewish people! "To these men," says Dwight, "he opposed himself with uniformity and immovable firmness; exposing the unsoundness of their wretched doctrines, the futility of their arguments, the hypocrisy of their professions, and the enormous turpitude of their lives." Think of the moral power that accompanied his words! When he had ended his sayings on one occasion, "it came to pass that the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Finally, as I must not enlarge—

§ 8. (*Fourthly*).—Our Lord, in his public labours as the great prophet, was distinguished by a spirit of ardent affection. His lamentation over Jerusalem affords decided proof of this. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which杀 the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" And it is in this respect especially that all the ministers of the gospel should strive to imitate their Lord. It is no doubt of immense importance to a minister to possess an enlarged acquaintance with Divine truth—to be able to state the doctrines of the gospel with great accuracy and precision; but if clearness of conception be not accompanied with warmth of affection, our knowledge of human nature, and our recollections

and experience of the past, do not warrant the hope of great and extended usefulness.

§ 9. It was said a short time ago, that it was in harmony with the Divine purpose that our Lord appeared personally to discharge the duties of the prophetical office. Dr. Dwight has devoted almost the whole of one lecture to a statement of the reasons which led Christ to assume the office of a preacher. They are as follows. First, he assumed it that the gospel might appear plainly and undeniably to be his. This was necessary to the honour of the Saviour, it is stated, and to an acknowledgment of the inspiration of the New Testament. Secondly, that he might confirm its doctrines, precepts, and ordinances with his own authority. Thirdly, that he might appear in the world as a preacher of righteousness. Fourthly, in order to the authoritative abolition of the peculiarities of the Mosaic system. Fifthly, to furnish an opportunity of faith and conversion to the Jews who lived at that time. Sixthly, to furnish important evidence of its Divine origin. Seventhly, in order to the fulfilment of numerous prophecies which foretold this part of his character.

§ 10. Some of the statements of Dwight, in illustration of these general remarks, are well worthy of attention: I am not sure, however, that they so clearly point out the reason which rendered it necessary for our Lord to discharge personally the office of prophet as they might have done. The more general question occurs here, Why was the mode, formerly resorted to, of performing the duties of the prophetical office by delegation, abandoned at the close of the former dispensation? Appearing personally in the world, as the great prophet whom God had promised to raise up, it is manifest that he could not but become a preacher of the

gospel which he introduced. But why was it necessary for him to appear personally? What may be conceived to have led to the decision, in the councils of Jehovah, that the Eternal Word should himself bring a revelation of the will of God to us, and that consequently all preceding institutions and events should be so ordered as to prepare the way for his coming? I answer, that in all probability, no embassy from the court of heaven, even though headed by the very chief of the archangels, would have been possessed of sufficient dignity and glory to make that moral impression upon the world which was necessary to secure the purposes of his mission. Darkness covered the earth, and thick darkness the people. Idolatry, with the exception of Judea, had become universal: all the inhabitants of the world were dead in trespasses and sins. Unless Jehovah then had deviated from his usual manner of proceeding, of influencing moral agents by moral means, the attention of the world generally could not have been secured to the discoveries and announcements of this last age of the church, had they been made by a being less exalted than the Son of God. The apostle Paul (Heb. ii. 1-3) shows us the important practical influence of the dignified character of the head of the gospel dispensation. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" And again, Heb. x. 28, 29: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punish-

ment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

We feel the vast importance of the fact to which I am now referring, in dealing with the consciences of men. It may be true, that if all that was made known by Christ had been stated by a confessedly human prophet, who could prove, by unquestionable evidence, the Divinity of his mission, it ought to have produced an impression upon us equal to that which it exerts at present. Yet we are sure that it would not have done so. We should not have felt in the same way ourselves. And in our addresses to our fellow men, we could not have stood on the vantage ground, which the fact enables us to take, that what we say to them primarily proceeded from the lips of the Son of God himself.

§ 11. *Thirdly.*—Let us observe the manner in which he discharged the duties of the prophetic office, after the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem. It was then a second time by delegation; for the apostles, in carrying to mankind generally the revelation which Christ had made, and in making those additions to it which were necessary to its full perfection, are to be regarded in the same light with the prophets of old. We admit that they were divinely inspired; it is of equal importance—at any rate it is of considerable importance—to remember that they received their commission from Christ. As the great work of mediation is entrusted to him, and as the prophetic office is one branch of that work, every communication of spiritual light to the world must be made, as we have seen, either mediately or immediately by him. "Behold," therefore

said he to them, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves."* "As thou," said Christ to the Father, "hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."† "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."‡ It does not oppose this statement, that the apostle Paul said on one occasion, "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment;" and again, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord:"|| because his intention was not to make a distinction between some things in his letter which rested on Divine authority, and others which did not; but between those which were expressly appointed by Christ, and those which were not; and hence, referring to the latter, he says, "And I think also that I have the Spirit of God."§ It is not my intention to enter further upon the proof of the Divine authority and inspiration of the apostles—upon the necessity for their preaching, or an account of the things which they taught, with reference to all of which you will find much valuable matter in Dr. Dwight. I will merely briefly observe upon a question which may be raised here,—viz. why the Lord Jesus, after abandoning the mode of discharging the duties of the prophetic office by delegation, resumed it again? why he committed the great work of carrying the gospel to the whole world to the apostles, instead of remaining on earth, as he might have done, to be himself, as he had formerly been, the herald of mercy? I answer—

§ 12. (*First*),—that the great work of evangelizing the world could not have been performed by him personally, because his mission did not extend to the whole world.

* Matt. x. 16. † John xvii. 18. ‡ Matt. xxviii. 18.

|| 1 Cor. vii. 6 and 12. § 1 Cor. vii. 40.

He was the apostle of the circumcision. When the middle wall of partition had been broken down, and others besides the Jews were to be ministered unto, it was necessary that another ministry should be employed.

(*Secondly*).—that there existed no necessity for our Lord's continuing to discharge personally the duties of the prophetical office, for a period longer than that during which he actually fulfilled them. His continuance in the world for a limited period, in connection with what he did and said and suffered, was sufficient to encircle the dispensation which he introduced with all that importance and glory without which, as we have seen, its moral influence upon the world would not have been sufficiently powerful. As long as it was necessary for him to render his personal services as the great prophet of the new dispensation, they were not withheld; to have continued them longer would have been a needless submission to privation and suffering.

(*Thirdly*).—His continuance to discharge personally the duties of the prophetical office would not only have robbed him for a season of the honour to which he had entitled himself by his work, but it would have prevented, during the same period, his assumption of another part of the mediatorial work, equally important and equally necessary to the church and the world. Had he remained preaching the gospel amongst men, his ascension to the throne of universal empire must have been delayed. Now it was more necessary for us that he should take possession of the kingly office, than that he should remain discharging the work of a prophet in the world. This latter part of his work might be performed by proxy or delegation; the former could not. It was competent to him to commission the apostles to teach for him, but

not to reign for him. And since the Spirit from on high, whose influences were so essential to the diffusion of his gospel in the world, could not be poured out till he was seated upon his throne, he resorted to the station where his personal presence was essential, and left the work, which could be performed by others, in the hands of those who he knew would discharge it with fidelity and perseverance. In entire harmony with these remarks, and confirmatory of them, we find the Saviour addressing his disciples before his ascension : “ It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”* And again : “ We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things ; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”†

* John xvi. 7.

† Acts v. 29–32.

LECTURE XI.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS PRIESTHOOD.

The meaning of the term,—description of the work performed by the Redeemer under this character:—the Epistle to the Hebrews, a proof of the fact of his priesthood:—qualifications for the discharge of the duties of the priesthood, Divine appointment:—the assumption of the human nature :—perfect holiness :—tenderest sympathy :—and his eternal existence a qualification for the ceaseless discharge of the priestly office.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

§ 1. THE office of Mediator, which Christ assumed, imposed on him the necessity of doing that which was necessary to repair the broken bonds of amity between God and man. To secure the accomplishment of this object, much required to be done in relation both to God and man. There were obstacles on both sides to a complete and cordial reunion,—obstacles highly honourable to Jehovah, but deeply disgraceful to the rebellious subjects of his government. We have hitherto contemplated the means, or rather a part of the means, employed by Christ to remove the distance and alienation in the case of the latter. The priesthood of Christ is a general and comprehensive term, descriptive of all that is done by him, in reference to God himself, with a view to the

healing of the breach, and of which we meet with such ample accounts in the inspired volume. The priesthood of Christ, Turretine tells us, is that branch of the mediatorial office “secundum quam Christus ea peregit apud Deum, quæ pro peccatoribus erant peragenda, tum se ipsum semel efferendo in victimam pro ipsis, tum pro ipsis semper apud Patrem intercedendo.”* This office, or rather the work which the Saviour performs in his sacerdotal character, is the basis of all the blessings we derive from him; to it must be traced all his gracious acts towards men as the prophet of the church, and the king whom God hath set upon his holy hill of Zion. And hence it might perhaps be the more correct and logical order to commence our account of the mediatorial work of Christ with an explanation of his priesthood; for his prophetic office rests upon his sacerdotal. He announces in the former character what he has done in the latter. As the prophet of the church, he proclaimed the way of salvation which he was to open, when, as the great sacrifice for the sins of the world, he should shed his blood upon the cross. We must never forget that the promises of mercy to returning sinners which were issued by the ancient prophets, and that the mercy which was actually received by such as obeyed their voice, were made and bestowed on the ground of the decease which Christ was to accomplish at Jerusalem. He was doubtless *de facto* a prophet before he was actually a priest; but he could not have entered upon the former work, if he had not been destined to perform the latter. No mercy can flow to the world but through the channel of his atonement; no mercy could accordingly have been

* “— according to which Christ transacts those things with God which the case of sinners rendered necessary, by offering himself once as a victim for them, and then by interceding always with the Father on their behalf.”

announced to the world, had not he engaged to suffer the full penalty of the law in the fulness of the time, that so God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Viewing things then in the light in which Jehovah must view them, with whom there is no distinction of past, present, and to come, we should doubtless commence our account of the mediatorial work of Christ with an explanation of his priesthood. Yet as the actual assumption of the prophetic office was to us, with whom there *is* a distinction between time present and future, an event which took place before the actual assumption of the sacerdotal office, it is common to follow the order we have marked out to guide our steps and progress. What I have to bring forwards on the subject of the priesthood of Christ may be comprehended in the three following particulars. First, I shall show that Christ actually sustained the priestly office and character; secondly, I shall mention his personal and official qualifications for the discharge of its duties; and thirdly, I shall more particularly and fully describe the nature of those duties. I am not sure that this order is the most natural and logical; perhaps it is not. Yet as the last is the point on which I intend particularly to dwell, it is I imagine the best adapted to the purposes I have in view.

§ 2. FIRST. *Proof of his priestly office and character is derived in abundance from the Epistle to the Hebrews:* for the very design of the writer of that epistle was to establish the fact of the priesthood of Christ; and thus to remove a stumbling-block which would otherwise have lain in their way because the Levitical priesthood was, without doubt, of Divine appointment. And the Jews were so firmly convinced of this fact, and so fully aware of the necessity of those services which the priests only

could render to approach unto God with acceptance, that if Christianity could not have exhibited its priest, and not have proved, in addition to this, that the Levitical services were now to end, because they had terminated in a more glorious ministry—a ministry of which they were but shadows and types,—it is manifest, I say, that it would not have won the serious attention, and far less the faith, of a single descendant of Abraham according to the flesh. Accordingly, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says (chap. viii. 1), referring to his statements in the preceding part of the chapter, “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens.” And after speaking of the former tabernacle, he proceeds to say that it was “a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (chap. ix. 9–14.)

He performed the duties of a priest; the nature of

which is clearly exhibited by the same writer, chap. v. 1. He, *i. e.* the “high priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” This was done by Christ. He appeared once in the end of the world, “to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” He “was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (chap. ix. 26 and 28). He is gone to appear in the presence of God for us; and he ever liveth to make intercession for us (verse 24). “Having therefore, brethren, boldness,” the apostle adds, “to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (chap. x. 19–22).

§ 3. SECONDLY.—*Let us notice his official and personal qualifications for the discharge of its duties.*

First.—I observe, he was divinely appointed to the work. “No man taketh this honour unto himself,” says the apostle (Heb. v. 4, 5), “but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.” The very nature of the priestly office, if properly considered, must convince any one that Divine appointment to it was necessary to the acceptable discharge of its duties. The priests of old were the medium of intercourse between God and the children of Israel. They were to present to Jehovah the sacrifice of atonement; and the high priests, who especially typified Christ, had to carry the

blood into the holy place, and make intercession for the people. An assumption of this office, then, without a Divine sanction, must have exposed the daring intruder to the vengeance of the Most High. Accordingly we find that he destroyed Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with 250 of their rebellious confederates, for presumptuously attempting to thrust themselves into the office,* and cut off 14,700 of the children of Israel for murmuring at the judgment. And further, at an after period, when the heart of Uzziah the king was lifted up to his destruction, he was severely rebuked and punished for his presumption in attempting to perform the peculiar work of the priesthood, by offering incense unto the Lord.† We see from hence the importance of the statement, that Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest,—the importance of the name Messiah (Christ, anointed or sent,) which he bears; for if he had not been appointed to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth, it would have been impossible for us to repose any confidence in him. The truth of this statement will more fully appear, when we come to consider more fully the nature of his sacrifice; for the satisfaction which he rendered to God for the sins of men did not, as we shall perceive *per se*, lay Jehovah under an obligation, like the payment of a debt, to remit the punishment due to their sins. The previous consent of the Father that he should stand in the room of his people was necessary to this; and of this consent his Divine appointment to the priesthood affords undeniable proof.

It ought to be noticed here, also, that Christ was directly, as well as divinely appointed to the office. The priesthood of old was confined to the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron. It was inherited by natural

* Numb. xvi.

† See 2 Chron. xxvi. 16–23.

descent, according to Divine appointment; so that each individual priest might be said to have been called of God to the work. They were made, however, after the law of a carnal commandment. Christ, on the other hand, received his appointment immediately and directly from the Father. This was obviously necessary, because our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood. Not springing out of Levi, it was impossible for him to inherit it by descent. He could not be of the order of Aaron. Accordingly, the sacred writer assures us he was of another order, according to the oath, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,"—an order superior to that of the Aaronical priesthood; for Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes to Melchisedec in the person of Abraham, in whose loins he was;—and superior, among other reasons, because Melchisedec was without father, without mother, without descent,—*i. e.* as a priest not inheriting the office by descent, like the Aaronical priests, but receiving it by the direct and immediate appointment of God. The Aaronical priesthood was doubtless the appointment of God; but it was only designed to be temporary. Perfection could not be by it. It could not cleanse from guilt and pollution; it was weak and unprofitable. It was therefore destined in the Divine purposes to be changed; and this change in the priesthood rendered necessary a change of the whole law,—the abolition, in short, of the whole of the Mosaical institutions, which were so inseparably blended with the existing priesthood of that dispensation that they of necessity stood or fell together. And since Christ sprang from a tribe of which Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood, he received his appointment directly from God; he was inducted into it by

the oath of him who said unto him, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

§ 4. *Secondly.*—I observe, that his assumption of the human nature into personal union with the Divine qualified him, in more respects than one, for discharging the duties of a priest. It rendered him capable of offering that sacrifice to God in which, as we shall afterwards see, a considerable part of the sacerdotal office consisted. “We see Jesus,” (Heb. ii. 9,) “who was made for a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death,” *i. e.* that he might be capable of suffering it, $\deltaι\alpha\tau\circ\pi\acute{a}\theta\eta\mu\alpha$, “crowned with glory and honour.” And again, chap. x. 4–7: “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O my God.” But why was a body prepared for him to enable him to do the will of God? The answer is, because that will involved the sanctification of the vessels of mercy, or their purification from legal defilement or guilt; and that could only be effected by the death of their substitute; by the which will we are sanctified, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Our blessed Lord, as a Divine person, was utterly incapable of suffering or death. If then any degree of either, or of both, was necessary to be endured in order to the accomplishment of the mediatorial work, it became essential that he should assume a nature which was accessible to them. Now we know not only that pain, but that even death itself was necessary to be endured for man’s salvation; for without shedding of

blood there is no remission. Our blessed Lord therefore took part of flesh and blood, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (chap. ii. 14).

Further I observe, and this is suggested by the passage I have just quoted, and the connection, that our Lord’s assumption of the human nature not only rendered him capable of suffering for us, but, by the relationship it established between us and himself, gave a peculiar propriety to the circumstance that it was undergone on our account by him. He took part of flesh and blood, not only that he might have the power to redeem, but that it might be proper for him to redeem. A satisfaction must be rendered to God, by a being possessed of the same nature with the offender. Hence an angel, had there been no other difficulty in the way, could not have become the Redeemer of fallen man. He took part of flesh and blood that he might possess a right to redeem. It will be recollect that of old, when an Israelite had waxed poor, and sold part of his possession, it could only be redeemed by one that was near of kin to him. (Lev. xxv. 25.) Hence in the beautiful story of Ruth, when she informed her mother-in-law in whose field she had gleaned, we are told that Naomi answered, “The man is near of kin to us, one of our next kinsmen”—one of our redeemers,—or, as it is in the margin of our larger Bibles, “one that hath the right to redeem” (Ruth ii. 20). There seems to me to be a reference to this in the whole of the second chapter of Hebrews. Doubtless, the main reason assigned by the apostle for our Lord’s taking part of flesh and blood is that he might be capable of dying, and so might destroy him that had the power of death. But there is a tacit allusion to the right which that circumstance gave him to purchase the church with his

own blood. The members of it are described as the children of God, as the brethren of Christ: the right of redemption is accordingly vested in him; being our kinsman, the redemption of the lost inheritance is the very work which the ancient law entitled him to perform. And since when of old a kinsman redeemed the inheritance of a widow, he married the widow, the Lord Jesus is represented as having espoused the church. There may also perhaps be a reference to the right of which we are now speaking in such passages as the following. "For when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." (Gal. iv. 4, 5.)

§ 5. *Thirdly.*—I observe that Christ was qualified by perfect and unspotted holiness for the great work involved in the priestly office. The apostle (1 Peter i. 19) calls him "a lamb without blemish and without spot:" he assures us that he did no sin, and that in his mouth there was found no guile (ii. 22). He could appeal to his enemies, and say to them, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46.) "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (xiv. 30). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares that he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners (vii. 26). And this assertion of the immaculate purity of the Son of God is attended with a declaration of its moral necessity: "Such an high priest became us"—was suited to our exigencies—such as our circumstances required and demanded. An holy Saviour is indeed necessary for us; but the necessity affirmed in this verse has a more especial reference to God. Nothing can be more manifest than that a being who undertakes our cause with God—who attempts to repair those bonds of amity which sin had broken—must not be himself a sinner. Holiness

was necessary to the Lord Jesus as a priest, and as a sacrifice. First, as a priest. The offerer who presents the offering must be holy, or it cannot be accepted by a holy God. This was intimated in the requisitions with reference to the priests of old; for the high priest was to be a person without blemish, not maimed in any part of his body. He was not to marry any one that was defiled, nor to defile himself among the people. He was carefully to abstain also from contracting ceremonial defilement. For this purpose, he was forbidden to be present at any funeral,—to defile himself for his parents, or to rend his garments at their death, or that of any other of his relatives. (Lev. xxi. 10–13). On his forehead, in his ministrations, he wore a plate of gold with the inscription, “Holiness to the Lord.” In consequence of the lack of holiness the posterity of Eli were ejected from the priesthood. It was meet and proper that those who ministered in holy things should be holy; but it was especially necessary that they might prefigure him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Secondly, holiness was necessary to the Lord Jesus as a sacrifice. It is essential that not merely the offerer, but that the offering he presents be holy, or it cannot be accepted by a holy God. Holiness was necessary to Christ as the lamb, as well as the priest. The sacrifices of old were to be without blemish, as well as the sacrificers. Hence it is said of Christ (1 Peter i. 19), that we have been redeemed with “the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

§ 6. *Fourthly.*—Jesus Christ was qualified by the tenderest compassion and sympathy for the discharge of the duties involved in the priestly office. This qualification was required in the priests of old. Heb. v. 1, 2: “For every high priest taken from among men is con-

stituted for men to officiate in things relating to the worship of God; and especially that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, being able in due measure to compassionate the ignorant and erring.” The very nature of the office required this readiness to compassion on the part of the priest. He was to offer sacrifice and to make intercession for the people; and a tendency to the angry emotions—a constitutional incapability of entering with feeling and tenderness into their situation when sinking under the burden of guilt—would have rendered him comparatively unfit for the discharge of his duties. And such, let us speak with due reverence, must have been the case in reference to our Lord himself, had he been destitute of compassion and sympathy. But this was not the case. “We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We have a merciful as well as faithful high priest in things pertaining to God.” (Heb. iv. 15; ii. 17.) And it must not escape our notice, that he is represented as having taken part of flesh and blood, that he might undergo the trials which his people have to endure, and so be able to sympathize with them. “It behoved him,” says the apostle, “to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are.”* He had no sinful infirmity, like the legal high priest, to give him an experimental fellow-feeling with us in that respect; yet he was exposed to sinful temptations. Satan set upon him

* Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15.

when he entered upon his public ministry, and pursued him with his instruments throughout the whole course of it. He felt the weakness of the flesh, in hunger, want, weariness, and other infirmities pertaining to the body; and his holy soul was afflicted with sorrow, shame, reproach, and contempt, for he was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” In short, he experienced the dreadful effects and penal evils of sin, in bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows unto death, as the substitute of the guilty. Thus he suffered being tempted or tried; and this is represented as a qualification whereby he is able to succour them that are tempted. “In his Divine nature,” says an excellent writer, “simply considered, he was incapable of suffering, and yet as God he was certainly able to succour the tempted; therefore ability here, as connected with his sufferings, does not mean mere strength or power to succour, but also inclination and readiness to do it. In this sense the word (*δυνατὸς*) *able*, when applied to God or Christ, is often used. (Rom. iv. 21; xi. 23; xiv. 4; xvi. 25.)

“Further: as Christ’s ability to succour is connected with his trials and sufferings, it must have a respect to him in human nature, and as possessed of all the tender feelings and affections of humanity. Men who have undergone much affliction themselves are ordinarily more susceptible of sympathy with others in distress, and have a stronger propensity to assist them, than those who have no experience of affliction. So Christ, though he is now exalted, yet as he still remembers what temptations and sufferings he endured in this world, so he knows the heart of a tempted sufferer, and is well acquainted with all the afflictions and trials of his brethren; he knows what aids are necessary to their overcoming temptation, and is affectionately disposed

from sympathy, and in all respects fully able and ready to succour them."

There is no mystery or difficulty in the preceding statements, though many have thought so. Since Christ was really a man, though more than man, he must have been rendered increasingly accessible to sympathy, through the influence of the circumstances which foster that spirit in men in general. It may be worth while, however, to notice the additional confidence which the recollection of the Saviour's sufferings gives us that needful help will not be withheld. This seems to me to be hinted at in the conclusion of the fourth chapter. "We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We cannot divest ourselves of the feelings of our nature. Were we to think, while suffering affliction, of two individuals equally worthy, equally disposed generally speaking to acts of kindness, we should, I doubt not, unburden our sorrows, with a greater confidence of securing sympathy, to him who had undergone similar trials. Oh what relief does the mind feel in the reflection, that the Being to whom we direct our thoughts and prayers was once the man of sorrows! and when to this is added the recollection that this man of sorrows is the mighty God, able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, we are ready to say with the psalmist, "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

§ 7. *Finally.*—I observe that the eternal existence of

Christ qualifies him for a ceaseless discharge of the duties of the priestly office. There were of old (Heb. vii. 23–25) “many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this,” adds the apostle, “because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost,” or for evermore, “that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.” By the oath of the Eternal, he was constituted a priest for evermore; and hence it is said that he is gone to appear—that is permanently and for ever—in the presence of God for us (ix. 24). Such are some at least of the official and personal qualifications of our blessed Lord for the duties involved in the sacerdotal office. It is impossible, considering what there is before us, to dwell upon any of them at length; but I trust sufficient has been said to show that the most unbounded confidence in his power and readiness to save is not more than he deserves.

LECTURE XII.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS PRIESTHOOD.

(CONTINUED.)

The precise duties of the priestly office consisted of making atonement and intercession:—proof of, from Scripture:—the opinion that Christ was not a priest on earth, examined:—Dr. Owen's views of:—the opinion that the priesthood of our Lord did not commence on earth, Socinian:—this opinion, as held by Mr. M'Lean and Dr. Russel, reviewed:—the opinion, that private individuals slaying their own victims, performed in that act a priestly office, throws light on this subject:—the opinion that Christ was consecrated to his office of priest by his blood, examined:—the wrong principle involved in the preceding views:—the statement of the apostle, that if Christ “were on earth, he should not be a priest,” examined:—direct arguments in support of the idea that our Lord sustained the sacerdotal character on earth:—Turretine's views adopted.

§ 1. HAVING shown that our Lord sustains the priestly office and character, and exhibited his official and personal qualifications for the discharge of its duties, we come now—

THIRDLY,—*to consider more particularly the precise nature of those duties.* Sufficient has been already stated to convey a general notion of them. As the great priest of the church, he does that in reference to God himself

which was necessary to be done, in order to remove the obstacles which prevented the restoration of amity between the Moral Governor and his revolted subjects. I now observe more particularly, that he offered up himself as a sacrifice for the sins of his people, and that he entered into heaven itself with his own blood to carry on a perpetual intercession on their behalf.* These are the two grand branches, atonement and intercession, into which the sacerdotal office of Christ divides itself: he did that on earth by which the obstacles to the pardon of sin are removed; and he afterwards ascended up on high, to secure, on the ground of that work, those outpourings of the Holy Spirit which will infallibly lead them to repentance, and thereby secure their actual forgiveness.

§ 2. These two distinct branches of the priestly office are set before us in more than one passage of the inspired volume. Heb. v. 1: “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin.” Our Lord accordingly hath part of flesh and blood: he was “made like unto his brethren, that he might make reconciliation for the sins,” or, as the words may be rendered, “propitiate for the sins of the people” (chap. ii. 17). “He offered up himself” (chap. vii. 27). “Offered himself without spot to God” (chap. ix. 14). “He appeared once in the end of the world, to

* Turretine, vol. ii., p. 439. It is thus described by him,—The orthodox affirm that his priesthood is a priesthood, properly so called, “quod partim in terris peregit per oblationem corporis sui, et verum et reale sacrificium ad expiationem peccatorum nostrorum; partim in celis peragit intercedendo pro nobis,” &c. The work connected with “which he partly performed on earth by presenting his own body a true and a real sacrifice for our sins, and which partly he carries on in heaven by interceding for us,” &c.

put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (chap. ix. 26). He "was once offered to bear the sins of many" (verse 28); and by the offering of his body once for all we are sanctified (chap. x. 10). "He bare our sins in his own body upon the tree." (1 Peter ii. 24.) He thus redeemed us from the curse of the law. (Gal. iii. 13.) God set him "forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 19 and 21.)

The following passages exhibit the intercessory part of the sacerdotal office. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv. 14–16.) "But this man" (or rather priest), "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (chap. vii. 24, 25). "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, hav-

ing obtained eternal redemption for us" (chap. ix. 11, 12). He has "not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (verse 24). "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John ii. 1.)

§ 3. The preceding passages are sufficient, I apprehend, to prove that the two branches, atonement and intercession, are really included in the sacerdotal office of Christ,—that our blessed Lord is to be regarded as having entered upon the priestly office, and as having officiated in that character, when he shed his blood on the cross, as really as when he afterwards ascended with the same blood into the heavenly holy place, to commence his perpetual and everlasting intercession. This statement is directed against an opinion which it will be necessary to examine, before I proceed to give a more distinct and full account of each of these alleged branches of the priestly office of our Lord,—the opinion that Christ was not a priest on earth—that he did not enter upon that part of his duty till he ascended up on high, leading captivity captive.

This opinion, though held by some in the present day who are worthy to be regarded as scribes well instructed, generally speaking, in the mysteries of God, was originally broached by the Socinians, that they might, as Turretine tells us, more easily disprove the truth of his satisfaction. To accomplish this purpose they determine, says the same writer, that Christ "sacerdotem non fuisse in terra, sed factum demum esse in cœlis, et mortem ejus non fuisse oblationem seu sacrificium veri nominis, sed preparationem quandam istius sacerdotii in cœlis demum administrandi. Tertio nullam

expiationem peccatorum fecisse per sacrificium aliquod in terra oblatum, sed expiationem quæ in cœlis per igitur esse nostri liberationem, tum a poenitentiâ, ne propter peccata damnemur, tum a peccatis ne iis serviamus.” *

§ 4. Dr. Owen, in his exposition of the Hebrews, refers to an English writer of the same class, who says that Christ was made a high priest for ever, after he had offered his one sacrifice; and after he was risen, ascended, and set at the right hand of God. And he gives us the following remarks upon this sentiment. “If by being made a high priest, only a solemn declaration of being made is intended, these things may pass well enough. For we allow that in the Scripture a thing is oftentimes said to be when it is first manifested or declared. So was the Lord Jesus determined to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead. But if it be intended—and the words will scarcely admit of any other interpretation—that when the Lord Christ was first made a high priest after all this was performed, the whole real priesthood of Christ and his proper sacrifice is overthrown. For it is said, he was not made a high priest until after that he had offered his one sacrifice. But this implies a contradiction; for there can be no sacrifice where there is no priest. And therefore the Socinians, who make the consecration of the Lord Jesus unto his sacerdotal office to be by his entrance into heaven, do utterly deny his death to have been a sacrifice, but only a preparation

* *i. e.* that Christ “was not made a priest on earth, but in heaven. His death was not a real oblation or sacrifice, but a certain preparation for the sacerdotal work to be transacted in heaven. Again (*tertio*, in third place), no expiation through any sacrifice was offered for sins on earth, but the expiation which is carried on in heaven is [is the ground] of our deliverance,—first, from punishment, lest we should be condemned on account of our sins; and then from our sins, that we might not continue in them.”

for it, as they fancy the killing of the beast to have been of old." *

§ 5. The declaration of Owen, that the Socinians deny the death of Christ to have been a sacrifice, is in perfect harmony with the language of the Continental Socinians quoted by Turretine, "nullam expiationem peccatorum fecisse per sacrificium aliquod in terra oblatum." I cannot therefore but feel some jealousy of the sentiment, that the priestly office of our Lord did not commence till he entered heaven, since such dangerous consequences have flowed from it; or, if it be scarcely allowable to represent them as its necessary results, since so bad a use has been made of it. I confess I cannot well avoid regarding the Unitarians with some degree of suspicion, even when *dona ferentes*; † which however is not, I think, the case here. We must not for a moment conceive of such men as M'Lean, Russel, and others of that class, as admitting the Socinian notions of the atonement to be the legitimate consequences of their views concerning the time when the priesthood of our Lord commenced; yet they do in fact harmonize with them on that point. Conceiving it certain, that when the apostle says of Christ he was made perfect through suffering, the meaning of the word is he was consecrated to the office of priest by suffering, Mr. M'Lean thus writes: "Now if Christ was consecrated to the priesthood by his own blood, then he must have suffered in order to his

* Works, vol. v., pp. 573, 574.

† [*i. e.* "bearing gifts,"—a part of the language put by Virgil into the mouth of Laocoon, a son of Priam and Hecuba, in reference to the Greeks, called also Danae, when remonstrating against the proposal of bringing the celebrated *Wooden Horse* within the walls of Troy,—

"—— timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

I fear the Greeks even when bringing presents.

Aeneid, ii. 49.]

consecration, and before his hand could be filled to enter into the holy heavenly place with his offering. Upon the whole, though Christ suffered on earth, giving his life a ransom for many, sustaining the curse of the law in our stead, and bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, yet it does not appear from Scripture that in this he acted in the character of high priest, but of a voluntary substituted sacrifice; for he was not consecrated to be a priest upon earth, but to present his offering and minister in the heavenly sanctuary.”*

§ 6. The same general sentiments are also avowed by Mr. Russel,† and detailed by him at considerable length in the second volume of his Letters, and especially in two numbers of the *Christian Herald*, upon neither of which works have I been able to lay my hand, and can therefore refer only generally to the arguments which he, in common with M'Lean, brings forwards in support of them. I shall not, I apprehend, be guilty of injustice to these writers, if I state that the only arguments which it is necessary for me to meet are the following.

First.—It was not the peculiar duty of the priests of old to slay the animal which was offered up in sacrifice. On some occasions, at all events, it is said, if not on all, when the victim was for an individual, it was the offerer himself, and not the priest, who laid his hand upon the head of the animal, and killed it in the appointed place. (Lev. iv. 24–29.) There is even a passage, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, in which the slaying of the animals, and the performing of the work of a priest, appear to be set in contradistinction the one from the other. Of those Levites who had been guilty of idolatry, God said, by the mouth of his prophet, “They shall be ministers

* Heb., vol. ii., p. 256.

† [The late Dr. Russel of Dundee.]

in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering, and the sacrifice for the people. . . . But they shall not come near unto me to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near unto any of my holy things, in the most holy place" (chap. xliv. 9-14).

The argument built upon this statement of the fact is, that Christ in the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem is not to be regarded as acting in his priestly office and character—that he only began to officiate as priest when he entered the heavenly holy place with his blood.

It has been much relied upon, as an answer to the preceding statements, that when the high priest, who was more especially typical of Christ, made an atonement for the whole congregation, it was his exclusive duty to slay the animal which was offered up in sacrifice. He officiated as a priest in that act; and therefore Christ was a priest on earth when he poured out his soul unto death. (Lev. xvi.) If however the statements of one of our best writers, Dr. Outram on Sacrifice, is to be depended on, we must not rely much on the validity of this reply. "In these things," says he, "in which the sacrifice of Christ consisted, he sustained the threefold character of offerer, victim, and high priest. Of offerer on our behalf, and likewise of victim about to be slain, in his oblation of himself to death; of victim also in death itself; lastly, of high priest, and of a victim already slain for our sins, on his entrance into the heavenly sanctuary. For there he now appears in the presence of God in both characters; and by the efficacy of his sacrifice, as our high priest, he commends us and our sacrifices to God. And as the high priest of the Jews," he adds, "when offering before the altar the victims for the whole congregation,

previously to their being slain, acted not so much in his pontifical character as in that of representative of the congregation, so I consider Christ, in his oblation of himself to death, to have acted not so much in the capacity of high priest as in that of our representative. For in the sacrifices of individuals, as we have more than once already observed, it was the business of the offerers themselves to bring their victims to the altar, and then to offer or consecrate them to God. It is evident therefore, that those who performed these offices in the sacrifices of the whole congregation, while performing them, represented the whole congregation. Hence it follows that our Lord Jesus Christ also, in his oblation of himself to death, acted not in the character of high priest, but as our representative; just as the Jewish high priest, in offering before the altar the victims about to be slain, on behalf of the whole congregation, acted not in his peculiar character of high priest, but as the representative of that congregation.”*

§ 7. I confess there is great plausibility in this statement of Outram; nor do I think that the general argument of M'Lean and Russel, derived from the facts to which we have referred, is destitute of force. I cannot, satisfactorily to my own mind, dispose of it without supposing, as I am inclined to do, that individual offerers who brought their own victims, and sacrificed them with their own hands, are to be regarded in that act as doing the work of the priest. Why should we not regard them in the same light, with the arms of the priest, or rather with the knife with which the animals were slain? Originally every man, or rather every head of a single family, was the priest of that family. He had to slaughter the victim, and to pour out its blood before Jehovah;

* Page 318.

and thus practically to implore that the life of the beast might be accepted instead of that of the transgressor. In process of time, however, a particular family and tribe were especially designated to the sacerdotal office; when the duties of offering sacrifices, and of making intercession for the people, were devolved generally upon them. It would not appear, however, that this transference was so complete as to render it improper that some of the more subordinate parts of the priestly office should continue to be performed, at certain times and under certain circumstances, as before, by the people themselves. Doubtless there were other parts, of a more impressive, and solemn, and august nature—such as burning incense and carrying the blood into the most holy place—which could be only lawfully performed by those who possessed the sacerdotal character. Hence these parts came to be considered and denominated the work of the priests; and this accounts for the language of Ezekiel to which I have referred, and which has been relied upon by some as perfectly decisive of the controversy.

If this statement be admitted, the argument we are now considering loses all its force. The slaying of the animal was in fact a sacerdotal act, as it had been before the institution of the Levitical priesthood; but it was an act which the general transference of sacerdotal duties to one tribe did not entirely take out of the hands of the people in general. Christ therefore—if we are to form our judgment by merely contemplating the type—acted as a priest when he poured out his soul unto death. There is, in my judgment, so much plausibility in the reasoning, that if the slaughter of the animal was not a sacerdotal act in common cases, it could not be, as Outram says, a pontifical act when performed by the

high priest himself, that I prefer the solution of the difficulty which I have now suggested to that on which, as I have said, many seem disposed to dwell. Some of the arguments by which Owen and Turretine oppose the notion, that the priesthood of Christ only commenced when he ascended up on high, are, I am convinced, inconclusive on these principles. They both tell us that where there is a true sacrifice, there must be a true priest. The death of Christ and the death of the animal was, in their opinion, that in which the sacrifice consisted. Now as others besides the priests slew the animal of old, it follows, as clearly as that two and two make four, either that they were priests, or that the sacrifice did not consist in the slaughter of the animal.

§ 8. *Secondly.*—It is urged by Messrs. M'Lean and Russel that Christ was consecrated to the priesthood by his death or blood, and therefore could not officiate as priest in offering himself on the cross as the substitute of the guilty. Now if this statement be correct—if Christ was really consecrated to the priesthood by his death, it is manifest that we must adopt their views in reference to the commencement of our Lord's sacerdotal character, let the consequences be what they may. He could not manifestly act as priest, in a work by which he was consecrated to be a priest. Let us examine. Referring to Heb. ii. 10, M'Lean says, “The word rendered ‘to perfect’ signifies also ‘to consecrate to an office,’ or to invest in it; and it is likely that this is the sense which is more directly intended here, for in the verse immediately following he speaks of what was proper to Christ as a priest. Aaron was vested in the office of high priest by the blood of the ram of consecration (Lev. viii. 22–25); which in Hebrew is termed ‘the ram of fillings,’ and in the Greek Version ‘the ram of

perfections.' Hence to consecrate a priest is, in Hebrew, 'to fill his hand,' and in Greek 'to perfect him.' (Exod. xxviii. 41; xxix.) So that the priests were consecrated to their office by applying sacrificial blood to them, and filling their hands with samples of the offerings (Exod. xxix. 20–26); and by these and other ceremonies they were perfected, or thoroughly fitted and qualified to appear before the Lord in behalf of the people, and to minister to him on their account with acceptance. The apostle therefore, alluding to this, uses the style of the Septuagint, and says that Christ was perfected through sufferings, or consecrated to the office of high priest by the blood of his own sacrifice, in which he was brought again from the dead, and so was fitted to enter with it into the holiest of all, even heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for his brethren. This appears also," he adds, "to be the sense of the word in chap. v. 10: 'And being perfected,' *i. e.* consecrated, 'he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, called' or styled 'of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.'" *

§ 9. The language of Mr. Russel is to the same effect, though, for the reason formerly mentioned, I am unable to lay before you his own words. Now I must confess that the whole of these statements appear to me to go upon a wrong principle,—they explain the anti-type, and what is stated in relation to him, by the type, and what is stated in relation to it. There can be no question that our blessed Lord, however officially, was not actually qualified to perform that part of his sacerdotal work which both parties agree he had to carry on in heaven, till he had offered himself on earth as a lamb without blemish and without spot. The intercession he

* Vol. i., p. 67.

carries on there, or his entrance and appearance there with his own blood—a mode of expression which the sacred writers have adopted in consequence of previously existing Jewish customs—derives all its efficacy from his vicarious sufferings and death. He would have had no ground on which to rest his intercession on our behalf, if he had not previously died in our room and stead. Accordingly it pleased the Father to make him perfect, *i. e.* thoroughly to fit and qualify him, not for the office of the priesthood generally, but for that particular branch of it which he carries on in heaven,—for that part of his work by which he secures the accomplishment of his purposes of mercy in reference to man, by actually rescuing the chosen to salvation from guilt and pollution. Hence it is observable, that in the immediate connection of one of the passages (chap. v. 9) on which Mr. M'Lean builds his argument, we meet with the declaration that Christ “being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

Very similar remarks may be made in reference to the type—the earthly high priest. Doubtless he was not thoroughly fitted or qualified to enter into the holy place till the sacrifice had been slain, and he had received of its blood. Had he passed through the second veil without this, there would have been no proper and adequate foundation for the intercession he was to carry on in the most holy place. His proper business there was to offer the life of the animal, by presenting its blood, which was its life, in substitution for the life of the congregation. It was necessary for him, then, to have that life to offer. He was qualified in this manner for this particular act of the priesthood. But the possession of the blood, which is the life of the animal, was

not necessary to the discharge of every priestly act. In like manner, Christ was qualified for the work of intercession by his death; but he was not consecrated to the priesthood itself by that event. Doubtless he needed and received Divine appointment to that office, as did the priests of old; for “no man taketh this honour unto himself.” And when the family of Aaron, whom God had destined to the priesthood, were publicly inducted into it, it was meet, considering the shadowy nature of that dispensation, and the manner in which Divine instruction was imparted under it, that that induction should be by significant signs, indicative of the nature and various parts of the work they had to perform. That work included intercession, as we have seen, within the veil; and hence some of the ceremonies employed in their induction — such as applying sacrificial blood to them, and filling their hands with samples of their offerings—which exhibited in figure what was necessary to the successful discharge of this part of their work. And when these latter ceremonies were performed, since they indicated the last of the duties which the priest had to perform, their consecration was finished or complete. Now to expect anything minutely answering to all this in Christ,—to maintain that the baptism of our Lord was one part of his consecration to the priestly office, because the priests of old were to wash their flesh with water,—and that the filling of our Lord’s hands with his own sacrifice is to be regarded as another part of his consecration, because a significant act of that kind took place in the consecration of the Aaronical priests, is in my apprehension clearly to explain the antitype by the type, and it exposes us to the danger of obscuring the glory of that great subject which we desire to illustrate. The high priests of old were doubtless typical of Christ;

but that does not entitle us to explain the manner of his consecration by theirs, especially as he was not of the order of Aaron, but of that of Melchisedec; and of the way in which he was consecrated to his office the sacred writers say nothing. Our Lord was constituted a priest by him that said unto him, “The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. vii. 21). As to his consecration to that office, if anything more be meant by that expression than his actual entrance upon it under Divine appointment and direction, when he clothed himself in our nature, and came to make peace by the blood of his cross, I can form no conception of what is intended.

§ 10. *Thirdly.*—It is argued that our Lord’s priestly office could not commence till he ascended up on high, because the apostle affirms (Heb. viii. 4) that “if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law.” This argument, I am ready to admit, is *prima facie* a very strong one. There were priests on earth of Divine appointment,—they preoccupied the ground,—they left no room for the exercise of his priesthood on earth; if he exercised it at all, it must be in heaven. This was the argument of the ancient Socinians to get rid of the doctrine of atonement. “Atonement,” such was their argument, “if it had been made, must have been made by Christ on earth as a priest; but Christ was not a priest on earth, therefore the doctrine of atonement is unfounded.” I need not say that Messrs. M’Lean and Russel most firmly believe the doctrine of atonement; yet they both argue from this passage that the priesthood of Christ did not commence till after he had left the world. I give you the substance of the replies of Turretine and of Dr. Owen to these statements. The

former tells us that when the apostle says of Christ, "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest," he did not intend to deny absolutely that Christ was a priest on earth, since he had asserted in the preceding chapter that he was so; that therefore his language must have respect to that act or part of his priestly office which he describes as his appearance and intercession with the Father on behalf of his people, which could not be carried on in any other place than in heaven; that the apostle refers to the present time, and means that if now Christ were on earth, and were to remain, as he means, permanently on earth, he could not be a priest, as the high priest of old did not always remain without, but was constrained sometimes to go into the most holy place, in order to fulfil all the parts of his office. "But it does not follow," he proceeds, "that if our Lord's entrance into heaven was necessary to the continuance or consummation of his priesthood, that it was necessary to the establishment or commencement—*constitutionem* of it; on the contrary, he could not have ascended into heaven, if he had not been previously a priest. It is allowed," he adds, "that his priesthood could not have been completed on earth; but it does not follow that it could not have been begun there. That which relates to the continuance of a priesthood does not always appertain to its establishment. It is one thing for his priesthood not to be perfect and finished on earth," which we concede; and "another thing not to be truly and perfectly a priest on earth," which we deny. The passion and death of Christ must indeed precede his intercession, which is another act of the priesthood to be carried on in heaven; but they cannot be called a preparation for carrying on his priesthood in heaven, since the sacerdotal oblation consists in his death itself.

Heb. v. 5, does not teach us when Christ was constituted a priest, but by whom, viz. by the Father. It points out, therefore, the Divinity of his appointment, but not the time.

Dr. Owen, whose sentiments are not very luminously expressed, understands the words "if he were on earth" to mean, "if he were to continue on earth, and had a priesthood of the same order and continuance with that of the law;" and gives the following as the meaning and force of the whole declaration. "If we did aver him to have such a priesthood, as in the discharge thereof he were always to continue on earth, and to administer in the sanctuary of the tabernacle or temple with the blood of legal sacrifices,—on this supposition the apostle grants that he could not be a priest. It will be said," he adds, "that he was a priest on the earth, and that therein he offered his great expiatory sacrifice in and by his own blood. This is true: but, first, this was not on the earth in the sense of the law, which alone appointed the sacrifices on the earth; it was not in the way, nor after the manner of the sacrifices of the law, which are expressed by that phrase on earth. Secondly, though his oblation or sacrifice of himself was complete on the earth, yet the whole service belonging thereunto, to make it effectual in the behalf of them for whom it was offered, could not be accomplished on the earth. Had he not entered into heaven, to make a representation of his sacrifice in the holy place, he could not have been the high priest of the church from that offering of himself, because the church could have enjoyed no benefit thereby. Nor would he ever have offered that sacrifice, if he had been to abide on the earth, and not afterwards to enter the heavenly sanctuary to make it effectual. The high priest on the great day of expiation perfected his sacri-

fice for his own sin, and the sins of the people, without the tabernacle. But yet he neither could, nor would, nor ought to have attempted the offering of it, had it not been with a design to carry the blood into the holy place, to sprinkle it before the ark and mercy-seat, the throne of grace. So was Christ to enter into the holy place not made with hands, or he could not have been a priest."

§ 11. Upon the whole we may, I think, safely conclude that the apostle did not intend to affirm that our Lord was in no sense a priest on earth; but rather that he was not an earthly priest, and that the longer, if not the more important part of his ministry, was to be carried on in heaven. I proceed to state some of the more direct arguments in support of the opinion that our Lord sustained the sacerdotal character in this world. This opinion is earnestly supported by Turretine; but I am constrained to admit that some of his arguments, though they had force doubtless against the Socinians, who were the especial objects of his attack, are not conclusive against the statements of Messrs. M'Lean and Russel. I shall notice them as they occur. He argues that he was a priest on earth, and did not merely become a priest in heaven—

First, because he was called to the priesthood on earth. In proof of this he refers to Heb. v. 5; Matt. iii. 17. Turretine has committed a strange oversight with respect to the first of these texts. In a passage which I quoted a short time ago, he says the words do not teach us *when* he was constituted a priest, but by whom; here he produces them to show that he was constituted a priest on earth. Passing over this oversight, the argument of Turretine is however a valid one. Christ was made an high priest when he was brought

into the relation of Son; and this relationship was constituted at the moment of the miraculous union of the human with the Divine nature, as we formerly showed. It is possible that the apostle refers to the resurrection of Christ here, as in the first chapter; but although this should prove to be the case, he does not refer to it as the event which brought him into the relation of Son, but which proved him to sustain it: hence it is said (Rom. i. 4) that he was “declared to be the Son of God with power,” not rendered his Son, “by the resurrection from the dead.” Accordingly we find from Matt. iii. 17, to which Turretine refers, that God addressed him from heaven, before his resurrection, in the following manner: “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Then was Christ constituted a priest.

Secondly: he exercised the acts or duties of a priest in the oblation of his prayers for us, and of the sacrifice of himself. He refers to John xvii.; Heb. v. 7, 8; Ephes. v. 2; Heb. i. 3; and x. 6, 7, in proof that he did perform these actions. Of this there can be, and is, no doubt; but it is obvious that Turretine takes for granted the very point in dispute, when he says he performed them as a priest. Whatever be said in reference to the character in which he presented his petitions to God for us, the precise point of contest is whether Christ yielded up his life as a voluntary victim, as M'Lean contends; or as a priest, which his opponents think.

Thirdly, because the priest, who was a type of Christ, did not then only become a priest when he entered into the holy place, but was a priest even before the oblation of the victim. This is true; but it does not militate against the views of Messrs. M'Lean and Russel. They do not say that Christ became a priest by entering into the holy place not made with hands, but that he was

qualified for entering, or consecrated for the discharge of the duties he had to perform there, by those sufferings which took place a short time previously to his entrance. The high priest was a high priest before he entered into the holy of holies; but not till—so M'Lean and Russel would say—his consecration had been finished, in the manner so frequently referred to in the preceding part of this lecture.

Fourthly: the nature of the priesthood confirms the preceding statements, since it was constituted to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin; and these—I do not give his exact language—could not be offered anywhere but on earth. This again takes for granted the point in dispute. It was the presentation of the blood, our opponents would say, in which the real sacrifice consisted; and so the sacrifice which the Saviour offers is the oblation of his blood in the heavenly holy place. This statement however Turretine directly opposes, in what I state as his

Fifth argument,—viz. that where there is a true sacrifice, there must be a true priest. But he proceeds. On the cross the true sacrifice was offered: for the language of the apostle (Heb. vii. 27, and ix. 25–28,) cannot be referred to that intercessional oblation which he carries on continually in heaven. This negative he supports by the following arguments.

1. Because he treats concerning oblation, which answers to the oblation of the victims, which was effected formerly by their slaughter, and the pouring out of their blood.

2. Because he treats concerning an oblation which was made once, and which consisted in the passion and death of Christ; not in that which he continually carries on in heaven, for that which may be carried on for ever,

ad consummationem seculi, cannot be said to be done once.

3. De eâ sermo est, in qua visibiliter apparuit, quod de diebus carnis suæ in terra debet intelligi, non verò de ejus morâ in cœlis, in quâ nunc latet, donec ad judicium redeat.*

4. That oblation is to be understood which ought to precede his taking his seat at the right hand of God, since it is said that after he had offered one sacrifice for sin he for ever sat down at the right hand of God; where his one oblation is opposed to his sitting down for ever. And if this oblation consisted in the perpetual appearance of Christ for us, it would not be one offering or sacrifice, but a sacrifice for a continuance, even his sitting down. And it cannot be said that this sitting down follows this oblation, when it chiefly consists in it.†

I know not how Turretine would explain the fact referred to in the former part of this lecture, viz. that individuals who did not sustain the priestly character very frequently sacrificed the animal. If there be any truth in his argument, that where there is a true sacrifice there must be a true priest, they must have been priests as well as Christ, *i. e.* if by sacrifice we understand the act of taking away life. With the reasoning of Turretine in support of this I entirely agree. It enters, in my judgment, into the heart of the controversy, and is the only circumstance which tends to rescue that controversy, as carried on between M'Lean

* "This word (*once*, ἐφάπαξ, see Heb. vii. 27,) is used in reference to that oblation which he visibly offered in the days of his flesh on earth, and must be understood, not surely of his continuance in heaven, where he is concealed from sight till he returns to judgment."

† Vol. ii., pp. 439, 440.

and his opponents at least, from the charge of being a mere logomachy. It is manifest that it is the tendency of M'Lean and Russel's statements to represent the true atonement as having been made in heaven, not on earth. Indeed, the question was once asked me by an adherent of that system, whether I considered the atonement as having been made in heaven or on earth. The slaughter of the animal was not, they think, a sacerdotal act,—reconciliation was not effected by it,—the true atonement was made when the blood was carried into the holy place, and sprinkled on or towards the mercy-seat. It follows from hence, according to their system of making the type explain the antitype, that the death of Christ was only preparatory to the atonement,—that the latter was only effected when Christ ascended into the heavenly holy place with his own blood. This is however, I apprehend, clearly unscriptural doctrine. That one offering by which Christ hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified was, we are told, the offering of his body once for all. (Heb. x. 10, 14.) He once appeared—where? not in heaven, but on earth; for the apostle adds, “once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (chap. ix. 26). He entered in once into the holy place, not to obtain, but having obtained eternal redemption for us (verse 12). Were I to adopt the sentiments of Russel and M'Lean, they would be in danger of unsettling my views in reference to the nature of the atonement,—views formed upon the general statements of the inspired volume, especially of the New Testament, which represent us as having been reconciled to God, in the manner to be afterwards explained, by the death of his Son. (Rom. v. 10.) The peculiar phraseology, “Christ entered into the holy place with his own blood,” is evidently used in allusion

to what took place of old. We must be careful not to misinterpret it—not to understand literally what is meant to be understood metaphorically. Because the high priest of old literally carried the blood of the victims into the most holy place, and made intercession for the congregation by sprinkling it upon the mercy-seat, the intercession of Christ is exhibited by the terms to which I have just referred. But let us take care not to obscure the majesty of this subject, by suffering our views to be directed by a circumstance which should rather borrow its light from the New Testament. The Lord Jesus is doubtless gone to appear in the presence of God for us. He appears also in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb that had been slain; but his appearance there is not his atonement. It derives, on the contrary, all its practical influence from the atonement which he previously made on earth, when he gave his life a ransom for many. And if the great truth, that it is the death of Christ, opening the way as it did for the bestowment of pardon upon the guilty, consistently with the claims and the safety of moral government, be admitted by an individual, it is to me a matter of very subordinate importance when he dates the commencement of the priesthood of our Lord. *My chief objection to the notion I have opposed is its tendency to disturb our confidence in THIS FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH.*

LECTURE XIII.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS INTERCESSION.

The actual enjoyment of the blessing of redemption dependent on the intercession of Christ:—views of opponents:—his intercession not figurative but real:—one of the grand points of difference between the orthodox and Socinians on this point is, with *whom* intercession is made:—the interposition of Christ in heaven that of an advocate:—the manner of his intercession:—the persons on whose behalf he intercedes:—the blessings derived from the intercession of Christ:—the lessons taught us by this subject.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

§ 1. THE intercession of our Lord, as exhibited in passages to which we formerly referred, is the second of those grand branches into which, as we have seen, the sacerdotal office of Christ may be divided.* The discharge of this part of the duty which devolves upon him, as the great high priest of the church, is essential to secure to its members the actual enjoyment of all the blessings for the communication of which his sacrifice has laid a solid and an honourable basis. Hence the apostle, having affirmed the entrance of our Lord into the heavenly sanctuary, and assured us of the sympathy with which he regards his brethren, as he is not ashamed to call them, in all their afflictions, adds,—“*Let us therefore come*

* See Heb. iv. 14, 15; vii. 24, 25; ix. 11, 12, 24; 1 John ii. 1.

boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." In calling your attention to this subject, I shall lay before you, *first*, the *statements of opponents*; and in the *second* place, I shall endeavour to unfold the manner in which this intercession is carried on; in the *third* place, I shall point out the *persons* on whose behalf it is presented; *fourthly*, I will endeavour briefly to describe the *blessings* secured by it; and *fifthly*, I will detain you on a brief statement respecting the *lessons* taught us by the intercession of our Lord.

§ 2. FIRST.—In explaining the nature of Christ's intercession, it will be necessary, in order to make the subject more lucid, to lay before you *some of the principal statements of our opponents on this part of Divine truth*. That the Lord Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, and left this world after a residence with his disciples forty days, in the manner described by our histories, is admitted I believe by the Unitarians of this country generally. Some members of the fraternity on the Continent indeed deny his miraculous ascension, and, if I mistake not, discredit the fact of his ascension altogether. He went up one side of a mountain, and down on the other, they have the hardihood to state; and thus was taken, or rather took himself from his disciples. With unblushing infidels of this description we however have nothing to do. The contest we are more likely to be called to carry on is with those who admit that he ascended up on high, and are accordingly obliged to explain the intercession he is said to be carrying on in his exalted state in such a manner as that their statements shall not contradict their avowed opinions in reference to his death. Mr. Lindsey tells us that "the perpetual intercession of Christ may perhaps be the con-

tinual operation and effect of his miracles and doctrine in the world, by which men are brought to believe in God by him, and to be saved.” I find it difficult to persuade myself that this is not a mere joke; at all events, it deserves to be treated as such,—it is utterly unworthy of notice. The editors of the Improved Version tell us, that the intercession of Christ may mean the exertion of his powers in some way for the benefit of the church. In what way they do not pretend to specify: they acknowledge it to be an unknown way; and well may they do so,—for how Christ, if a mere man, as they contend, although exalted to heaven, should be completely cognizant of all the circumstances of all his people, and be able to afford them the aid they need, is certainly a difficulty sufficient to nonplus even Socinian ingenuity. I believe Unitarians unite in identifying the intercession of Christ with the exertion of his power; and they seem to suppose, that as the power which he exercises in heaven was not originally his own, but was granted to him by God, the good which by virtue of it he does to and for the church is expressed as if he obtained it from God by intercession. Thus, according to the old mode of escaping from a difficulty, all is figure, and the passages to which we refer give no countenance to the custom of offering prayers to God through the intercession of Christ.

§ 3. In opposition to this, we maintain that the intercession of Christ is a real, and not a figurative intercession,—that it consists in the representation or exhibition of his sacrifice as an honourable basis, on which the blessings of salvation may be bestowed upon those for whom he intercedes, and with the view of securing to them the enjoyment of those blessings. “The real entire nature of the intercession of Christ,” says Dr. Owen,

“consists in the representation of such things as may prevail in the way of motive, or procuring cause, with respect unto the things interceded for.

§ 4. The act of intercession, like all other acts, necessarily supposes some object towards whom it is directed, on whom it lights, or who is affected by it. Now the grand difference between us and our opponents, at least one of the grand points of difference, and which comprehends all the others, regards the proper and direct object of the act of intercession. Is it God, or man? Absurd as it may appear, the Socinian system represents Christ as interceding with man, and not with God for man. It confounds the kingly and the priestly office. The intercession of our Lord is an act of power; and the object of that act is the church. Let us see whether the statements of Scripture can be made to agree with this opinion. “But this man”—or “this priest,” as it should stand—says the apostle, “because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost,” or for evermore, “that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* Now the question is, Is this intercession an act which has God or man for its object, in the sense explained above? In order to show that man is the object of the act, which a Socinian must prove, or his system—on this point at least—falls to the ground, they tell us that the verb ἐντυγχάνω, rendered “to intercede,” both here and in the thirty-fourth verse of the eighth chapter of Romans, means “to interpose,”—Christ ever liveth to interpose for them, *i. e.*, as they

* Heb. vii. 24, 25. —— “*this priest*,” &c. In the original, ὁ δὲ, *but this*; and the supplemental word should not be *man* (*ἀνθρώπος*) but *priest* (*ἱερεὺς*), supplied from the preceding verse,—and there “*were many priests* (*ἱερεῖς*), &c.; “*but this [priest]*, because he continueth,” &c.

imagine, to aid their weakness with his power, and thereby to save them. On this gloss, I observe—

First,—that the verb $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\nu\gamma\chi\acute{a}v\omega$ will not bear the general sense of interposition. If it be allowed to denote interposition at all, it is an interposition of a peculiar kind, not by mere power; the interposition of the advocate, who pleads the cause of an individual at the bar of justice,—or the interposition of a friend, who pours out his cries and tears that merited punishment may be averted. The rendering of the Socinians must then be objected against. It is too comprehensive, containing a larger amount of meaning than the Holy Spirit intended to convey.

Secondly.—I observe, that if the rendering of the Socinians were not thus faulty from its comprehensiveness—if the word really included in its undoubted senses interposition by a direct act of power, there is sufficient in the passage to which we now refer, and especially in corresponding ones, to show that it is the interposition of an advocate, or an intercessor, that is meant. “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to *interpose* for them.” The question is, How to interpose? And I ask, if the very phraseology does not seem necessarily to imply that the interposition is not with them, as the direct and immediate objects of the act implied in the term, but with some one else, *i.e.* with God for them. This is rendered further manifest by the nature of that salvation which is secured by his living to interpose, viz. a salvation which he is able to secure as the great priest of the church; for his ability to save is deduced by the apostle, not from the mere fact of his unchanging existence, but from his unchanging priesthood. It is not said, it is to be especially observed, that this priest,

because he continueth ever, is able to save them to the uttermost; but because he has an unchangeable priesthood, in consequence of his essential immortality. Were it possible for him to be deprived of his priesthood, though he might retain his existence, he would lose his power to save. It is the salvation which Christ effects as a priest to which the apostle refers in this passage—the legal rescue of his people from guilt and condemnation, and not their deliverance by power from the hands of their enemies. And therefore the interposition of which he speaks in the end of the verse, if we permit the Unitarians to render it so, is a legal interposition—an interposition as priest, or it would not be congruous with the salvation to which he alludes; it is, in short, the presentation of his blood as the ground of the bestowment of those blessings which his people need. He ever liveth to present that blood in the holy place not made with hands; and hence he is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him. This view of the meaning of this passage is powerfully confirmed by the immediately subsequent verses.

§ 5. Parallel passages also establish the sentiment, that the interposition of Christ for us in heaven, as the Socinians denominate it, is the interposition of an advocate, or an intercessor. Take, for instance, Rom. viii. 33, 34: “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Now if we adopt the Socinian explanation, and read the passage “who also interposeth for us,” the question would still be, How does he interpose? by an act which has man, or God for its direct object? This, we have seen, is the great point

in controversy between us and our opponents: we maintaining that he interposes by pleading the merit of his sacrifice to secure our deliverance from the curse of the law; and they, on the other hand, affirming that he does it by exerting his power some way or another for our benefit, by supporting our weakness, and thus rescuing us from our enemies. Now I maintain that this latter statement of the meaning of the apostle is at utter variance with the context. Our Lord's affirmed intercession for us is adduced by the apostle as justifying his confidence that God's elect shall never come into condemnation—that no being can bring a charge against them which shall prevail to effect their final ruin. Who does not see, then, that this intercession is not the mere exertion of power, but a legal advocacy performed by him on their behalf—a presentation by him of grounds and reasons for their acquittal and justification which no adversary is able to gainsay or resist?

This explanation of the passage is powerfully supported by those words of John to which I have already referred. "My little children, these things write I unto you. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here we have that legal interposition—that interposition of Christ with God on behalf of his people, which we have stated to be the meaning of *ἐντυγχάνω* in the previous passages—distinctly affirmed. The editors of the Improved Version pass over this passage very nearly *sub silentio*: *παράκλητος*, say they, is a word of very general import; it seems to intend that Christ is the medium of reconciliation. Thus they make John to say, "If any man sin, we have a medium of reconciliation with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Now allowing this interpretation to stand, the question returns as in the former

cases, How is Christ a medium of reconciliation? The words “we have an advocate” must mean, we have one who can secure the pardon of sin, when unexpected and powerful temptations have prevailed against us, so that even in these melancholy circumstances we need not surrender ourselves to despair,—I say, they must mean this, or they would supply no source of comfort. How then does Christ secure the pardon of sin? Can any one doubt that the apostle intended to intimate that there is no need for despair, even when sin prevails? because he who made, as he proceeds to declare, a propitiation for the sins of the world, is ever at the right hand of the Father to plead its infinite worth, and thereby to secure the actual forgiveness of our iniquities.

The same view of our Lord’s interposition (to preserve the adopted and favourite term of our opponents), viz. the interposition of an advocate, or an intercessor, is given us in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. ix. 24): “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” His interposition is his appearance, presence, and power. It is an act which has God for its direct and immediate object. It is not the exertion of power put forth to aid the weakness of his people; but it is the employment of his influence as an advocate,—an influence derived from the infinite value of that one offering by which he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified.

The point I have hitherto endeavoured to establish is that God, and not man, is the direct object of our Lord’s intercession. This, as it was formerly said, involves every other. This view of the object of intercession exhibits the nature of it. It proves the truth

of the statement with which we commenced, that it consists in the representation or exhibition of his sacrifice as an honourable basis, on which the blessings of salvation may be bestowed upon those for whom he intercedes, and with the view of securing to them the enjoyment of these blessings.

§ 6. SECONDLY.—*The manner in which this intercession is carried on.* How does Christ present his obedience and sacrifice, as the moral ground on which may honourably be imparted the blessings which his people need? Is his intercession formal and oral? or is it rather virtual and practical? There are not wanting several important considerations which would seem to show that the latter supposition exhibits the real state of the case.

Oral supplication, as far at least as God is immediately concerned, is obviously unnecessary. We merely make use of words, in urging a petition, to exhibit to the individual, to whom we present it, the strength of the motive on which we ground our hope of success. When that is unnecessary—or when it can be done practically—by some significant action. That method is often resorted to, as in some cases at least beyond comparison more impressive and efficient. It is said that when Marc Antony delivered his funeral oration for Cæsar, he held up to the view of the multitude by whom he was surrounded the robe of his friend, pierced by innumerable daggers, and covered with dust and blood; and there can be no doubt that this practical intercession possessed a much more powerful influence over the passions of his hearers, in exciting them to revenge his death, than any language he could have employed. In like manner, it may be said that the verbal intercession of the Son of God in the world above is unnecessary—

perhaps less efficient than a practical intercession,—that the presence of our Lord in heaven, clothed in the body of his flesh, in the form and appearance of a Lamb as it had been slain, is the most powerful advocacy which even the exalted Redeemer himself can employ.

These remarks gather additional probability from the consideration that the essence of our Lord's intercession—that which is really efficient and prevailing with God—that which constitutes the moral ground on which the blessings of salvation are bestowed upon the church—is the infinite, unchanging, everlasting value of the Saviour's atonement. A verbal statement of its value is a mere adjunct of intercession; it is not the thing itself. That which really intercedes is the blood which was shed upon the cross. Hence it is represented by the apostle as speaking far better things than the blood of Abel. And hence also the high priest of old, when on the great day of atonement he entered into the most holy place, to make intercession for the children of Israel, uttered no verbal petition. It was the blood which really pleaded with God; and Aaron interceded for the people by sprinkling it upon and before the mercy-seat.

I confess, I am not perfectly satisfied that this argument is conclusive. Verbal supplication is not in one sense necessary, in relation to God, on the part of Christians in the present state; for the secret thoughts of the heart, the unutterable groanings of the spirit are all known to him. Yet no one would argue from this circumstance that it need not be presented. Verbal supplication was in one sense as unnecessary on the part of Christ, in relation to God, while he was on earth, as now that he is in heaven; yet we know that in the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications, with

strong crying and tears. If it be said, that though it is allowed that God must be acquainted with the wants of his people, and the desires of the Son, yet there may be other reasons which render verbal supplication necessary on earth, I most willingly concede it; but I ask in return, May there not be other reasons which render it necessary also in heaven? I do not by any means venture to say there are such reasons, but merely to intimate that we are not perhaps warranted to form any decided opinion upon the subject.

Oral supplication, it has been further thought, would be inconsistent with the glorified state of our Lord in heaven. Why it should be thought so, I confess however I am not very well able to conceive. If it be not a derogation from his glory to be a real suppliant to the Father, I cannot see how the mere circumstance of clothing his petitions in words, or what is equivalent to words, should deserve to be regarded in that light. Christ is represented as having entered heaven through the merits of his own blood; and it should never be forgotten that it is in consideration of that blood, as the result of the infinite complacency with which the Father rests upon the work of the Son, that the honour to which the Saviour is exalted is opened, and that blessings countless in number, and inconceivable in value, are poured out upon believers during their journey through the world. It is the blood of the Saviour which interposes (to adopt the favourite term of the Socinians), — it is his atonement, powerful as it is to satisfy the Divine justice, and magnify the Divine law, and to preserve the Divine government from the inroad of rebellion and anarchy, even while pardon is bestowed upon the guilty, and retaining that power as it must do and will do throughout eternity,—it is the atonement of our

Lord which carries in it the interceding energy,—it is on account of its infinite worth that believers obtain mercy, and find grace to help them in time of need. It is, I apprehend, rendered apparent and undoubted in heaven, in some visible and striking manner, that all spiritual blessings are bestowed on the ground of the atonement. Whether the verbal intercession of the Son of God be necessary to effect this, or whether his appearance there in the nature in which he suffered, and bled, and died, will be sufficient, I will not undertake to say. The following is the opinion of Dr. Owen. “The safest conception and apprehension that we can have of the intercession of Christ, as to the manner of it, is his continual appearance for us in the presence of God, by virtue of his office as the high priest over the house of God, representing the efficacy of his oblation, accompanied with tender care, love, and desires for the welfare, supply, deliverance, and salvation of the church.” *

§ 7. THIRDLY.—*The persons on whose behalf his intercession is presented.* On this point, as on every other, we must walk exclusively by the light of Divine revelation. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” These words were addressed to those whom John calls “brethren,” “beloved,”—to those who were qualified to enjoy communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, *i. e.* to real Christians. Again: “Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for *us*.” The term *us* includes all whom he denominates “holy brethren,” “partakers of the heavenly calling,” and whom he exhorts to “come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,”—*i. e.* to real Christians. Again, Heb. vii. 25:

* Vol. v., pp. 564, 565.

"Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost," because "he ever liveth to make intercession." For whom then does he thus intercede? "For those," he himself tells us, "that come unto God by him," *i.e.* for real Christians. Again, Rom. viii. 34: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Who are the individuals for whom the intercession is made? The context tells us that they are those who are interested in the love of Christ, "God's elect," whom he did predestinate, and whom he will ultimately glorify,—*i.e.* real Christians.

Thus it manifestly appears to be the doctrine of the word of God, that the intercession of our Lord is employed on behalf of his people only. And in this point of view, there is a broad line of distinction between his atonement and his intercession. There is a sense in which his atonement was made for all men, inasmuch as it was intended to constitute a broad and ample basis, on which the banners of the cross might be unfurled, and the whole family of man invited to partake of the blessings of salvation. But the intercession of Christ belongs to what the old divines call the "application" rather than the impetration of redemption. His interposition in the world above is designed to set in operation that grand system of agency by which he is brought to the enjoyment of that bright and glorious reward, for the sake of which he despised the shame of the cross,—even the eternal salvation of a multitude which no man can number, redeemed by his blood, from among all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. Of course his intercession has a narrower range than his atonement. It is confined to those for whom he gave

his life, with that speciality of intention to render it an eternal blessing to them, of which we have had occasion to speak formerly. It is never employed on behalf of others, as He can never intercede in vain.

§ 8. FOURTHLY.—*The blessings which he designs to secure by it.* One comprehensive statement will include the whole. He intercedes on their behalf for everything which is necessary to secure their final enjoyment of the kingdom above. The honour of rescuing a countless number of the human race from the deep degradation and wretchedness to which their apostacy from God had reduced them—of restoring them to a state of moral resemblance to the great Eternal—and of bringing them ultimately to glory—constitutes the reward which the Father promised to him. He is constituted the great Captain of their salvation; and his heart is set upon the attainment of this promised blessing, with a degree of earnestness, and warmth, and energy, of which we can form no adequate conception. Everything then which is essential to the attainment of this object he implores from his Father. Everything that is necessary to give them a legal title to the inheritance above, and to make them meet for its enjoyment—everything which is needed to secure their triumph over all their adversaries, to support them in the dark valley of the shadow of death, and to prepare them for an endless state of progression, of holy activity, and of sacred enjoyment, when they have reached its termination—the Redeemer intercedes with his Father to bestow. As the respective members of the great company of the chosen to salvation appear on the theatre of the world, he secures for them, by intercession in the manner previously described, that enlightening and renovating influence which separates them from the children of the evil one, and forms them

for his own glory: he pleads his sacrifice for the forgiveness of their past transgressions; and when they sin, he advocates their cause with his Father, so that they do not sink into despair and ruin. He watches over them with more than a mother's tenderness for the babe she has brought into the world, and nourishes at her bosom. He is intimately acquainted with their circumstances—their trials, their wants. Not an enemy rises against them whom he does not see; not a whisper of opposition is aroused which he does not hear; not a breath of reproach assails them which he does not feel. In all their afflictions, he is afflicted. He is able to succour them, having himself suffered being tempted; and whatever it is necessary to secure on their behalf, by the interposition of his advocacy and intercession, he will certainly obtain. “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

§ 9. FIFTHLY.—*The lessons which are taught us by the intercession of Christ.*

First.—The infallible security of all who come unto God by him. The almighty Saviour pleads with the omnipotent Jehovah on their behalf—intercedes for everything that is essential to their present security and their future glory! In these circumstances, they themselves must be omnipotent, at any rate invulnerable. Well might the apostle say, in a strain of holy triumph and joy, “What shall we then say to these things? If God

be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31, *ad finem.*)

Secondly.—The boundless love of Christ towards his people. The whole of his conduct towards them springs from this sacred—this blessed source. We were not deserving, says an excellent writer, but he was pitiful; we were not valuable, but he was bountiful; we were not necessary to him, but he was infinitely necessary to us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." It was because Christ was superlatively good, and because we were poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and in want of all things, that this glorious Being had compassion on us in our apostacy and ruin. He lived and died, he reigns and intercedes, that we might live, and not die. This great work he began to execute here; and he carries it on in the heavens throughout eternity. In that world of glory, although elevated to the throne of the universe, and beholding all things beneath his feet,—although loved, obeyed, and worshipped with supreme attachment and homage, by the great kingdom of virtuous beings, he assumes and executes the office of an intercessor for the fallen children of Adam. In that world he is not ashamed to call them, however degraded by their apostacy, and however odious by their guilt, by the endearing names of friends and brethren. He is the universal Ruler; but he is not ashamed to appear as the older brother, the firstborn of this human assembly,—nay, as a suppliant for those whom he rules. He is a person of infinite dignity and perfection; but he is not ashamed to appear as a companion to those who could originally say to corruption, "Thou art our father;" and to the worm, "Thou art our mother, and our sister." Thus

the character which he exhibited on earth, he sustains in heaven; he is full of grace and truth.

Thirdly.—The unchangeableness of the Lord Jesus Christ. From eternity he rejoiced in the foresight of the blessings to the enjoyment of which he intended to raise his people. When on earth, his heart was still set on the attainment of the same object. He endured reproach, and contempt, and shame, and spitting—the desertion of his friends, and the contumely of his enemies,—he encountered the wrath of man, the malice of devils, the anger of God,—he suffered the agonies of a violent and ignominious death, that he might bring his people to glory. He has ascended up on high to accomplish the same purpose. In that glorious world, amid all the splendours of his exaltation, he forgets not for a moment those worms of the dust whom he came to redeem,—those backsliding, frail, sinning apostates, for whom he poured out his blood on the accursed tree; but, in the strong language of the apostle, “ever lives to make intercession for them.” By his intercession, as well as by his government, he secures their continuance in holiness, cleanses them from secret faults, restrains them from presumptuous sins, and thus keeps them innocent of the great transgression. Thus his love is from everlasting to everlasting, great beyond example, beneficial beyond degree!

LECTURE XIV.

THE REDEEMER OF MAN—HIS KINGLY OFFICE.

The subjects of the lecture:—proof that our Lord is vested with regal authority:—real not figurative dominion:—the ground on which dominion was conferred on Christ:—the manner in which his power is exercised, in the kingdom of providence:—in the kingdom of grace:—the government of Christ does not interfere with the just authority of temporal sovereigns:—carried on by spiritual means:—it will secure the final conquest of the redeemed over their foes.

THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

§ 1. ALL that I shall feel it necessary or desirable to state on this subject comprises the following particulars. I shall *first* show that this office is actually sustained by our Lord; *secondly*, exhibit and support the view which we take of its nature,—that it is an actual dominion; *thirdly*, unfold the grounds on which this dominion was conferred upon him; and *fourthly*, point out the manner in which this power or authority is exercised.

§ 2. FIRST.—*I shall endeavour to prove that our Lord is actually invested with dominion.* Of this there can be no doubt, with those who submit their understandings and judgments to the word of God. “Wherefore,” says the apostle Paul, “God also hath highly exalted him,

and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 9-11.) And again, Ephes. i. 20-23: "He raised him from the dead; and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." These statements are in harmony with his own declarations. "All power," said he to the disciples, "is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In the judgment hall, also, he addressed Pilate in the following manner. John xviii. 36, 37: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." In this character the ancient prophets had written of him. (Isaiah ix. 6, 7.) And the sacred writer in the second psalm, looking forwards into gospel times, and contemplating the confederacy of the nations to prevent the establishment of his empire in the world, says, in the assurance of victory, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The Saviour then has dominion. I proceed—

§ 3. SECONDLY,—*to exhibit and support the view which we take of its nature, viz. that it is an actual and not a merely figurative dominion.* It is somewhat difficult to ascertain what our opponents understand by that power to which the Saviour is exalted. Mr. Lindsey, in commenting upon that passage in the first chapter of the Ephesians to which I formerly referred, says it is a figurative representation—that Jesus Christ is said, after his resurrection, to be seated at the right hand of God in heaven,—*i. e.*, as he explains it, to be advanced to the greatest dignity in the Christian dispensation; “above all principality, power, and might,”—*i. e.*, he says, above all the officers and ministers of the Jewish or Christian dispensation, expressed by the well-known phraseology of the present age, and the age to come. This interpretation, he thinks, makes the apostle’s doctrine consistent, intelligible, and pertinent; but it gives no countenance either to the commonly received opinion of the existence of a celestial hierarchy, or the popular doctrine of the superiority of Christ to angels and other supposed celestial spirits.

It is not very easy to determine what Mr. Lindsey means in the above extract, when he says that Christ is exalted to the greatest dignity in the Christian dispensation. The following extract from the sequel to his Apology will show more clearly what he does not mean. It is a note upon the sixth verse of the second chapter of Ephesians: God “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together with Christ in the heavenly places.” “As it is said, chap. i. 20, that God hath seated Christ at his own right hand in the heavenly places, so here it also said that God hath raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places: thus these Christians are actually supposed to be in heaven, and this change and

exaltation to be effected, while the apostles were alive. No real elevation therefore is intended, either of Christ, or his apostles and the first Christians; but it is the dress and clothing which the writer gives to the subject, to raise in his readers the most exalted ideas of the gospel, and of the mighty power of God by which it was propagated."

In harmony with this denial of Mr. Lindsey that Christ is really elevated, the Socinians, I believe, generally maintain that he has no real or personal authority or dominion. He is, they affirm, a figurative king, as well as a figurative priest, possessing no power to touch the hearts, either of his friends or his enemies, by direct influence, but governing them exclusively by the doctrines and promises and threatenings of that religion which bears his name; and in consequence of the influence of which he is said to be a king, and to have authority and power.

According to this view of the matter, there is no more propriety in denominating Christ a king than in designating—I do not say the apostles, because they, it may be said, were delegated by their Master,—but certainly no more propriety than in designating Moses a king. Christ and Moses were both men, according to the Socinian scheme. They received the light they communicated to the world equally from God. They received it directly from God: Moses not less so than Christ. If then the latter may be denominated, and is denominated a king, on account of the powerful influence of his religion, why may not the former? And yet Moses is characterized as a servant, and Christ as a son over his own house. It follows then, by necessary consequence, that the dominion of Christ is not the moral influence, or not merely the moral influence of the religion which he taught.

Independently of this objection, it becomes us seriously to ask ourselves, whether those statements of the regal authority of Christ to which we referred, as well as others which might have been adduced, "can be interpreted satisfactorily and fairly of nothing more than the moral influence of the Christian religion, excluding the idea of any personal agency, authority, and dignity in Christ himself." For myself, I acknowledge, I cannot but think, with an excellent writer, "that they who 'conceive that those expressions which appear to attribute to Christ personal dignity and authority are wholly figurative' might, upon the same principles, and with equal reason, adopt the theory of the Anti-supernaturalists,—that Jesus fainted on the cross, and was taken down apparently but not actually dead; that he was resuscitated by the care and efforts of some skilful Essenes, or other persons whose names and professional skill (like those of the Essenes) are studiously kept in silence; that he spent about six weeks in close concealment among his tried adherents; that, as it became no longer safe or practicable for him to remain undiscovered in or near Jerusalem, he took a favourable opportunity of going, with a select body of his disciples, to a retired summit of Mount Olivet; that while he was there, giving to them admirable instructions for carrying into the widest effect his virtuous and philanthropic plan for the improvement of the human race, it happened at the opportune moment that a thunder cloud rolled along the mountain, and cut him off from the sight of his companions,—a few flashes of lightning being mistaken by his honest but ignorant and timorous adherents for visions of angels, or the persons in white clothing might be two or three of the ablest and most trustworthy of his friends whom he had privately in-

structed in this part of his wisely adapted contrivance; that, taking advantage of this circumstance, he descended into the opposite valley; that he lived for some years afterwards in the deepest seclusion, showing himself only on very few occasions, and to very select persons, particularly to Saul, whom he accosted near Damascus, and prevailed upon to become a leader of the sect, which wanted a man of his character and talents; and that, in fine, where, how, and when this distinguished reformer and philanthropist ended his days, no historical document whatever has come down to us, and probably care was taken that none should exist.”*

Now if this statement had proceeded from the pen of a writer who avowedly regarded the Christian religion, and the gospel history on which it is founded, as a farce, it would be in character; but its appearance in the production of one who professes to believe the Divine origin of Christianity displays unparalleled inconsistency, as well as appalling impiety.†

* Dr. J. Pye Smith, vol. ii., pp. 329, 330, Fourth Edition.

† [The Editor has not been able to determine to what *individual* writer the statement in the text, as to “unparalleled inconsistency as well as appalling impiety” refers. Because, the preceding extract from “*The Scripture Testimony*” represents the opinions of a *class* of writers—the Anti-supernaturalists—not those of any *specified* individual. The Author cannot have supposed Dr. Smith to have adopted the notions condemned with such just warmth, for Dr. S. in the next page uses the following strong language:—“*In a word, if the declarations which have been adduced [from Scripture in the preceding discussion] do not attribute to Christ an INTELLIGENT, PERSONAL, and CONSTANT AGENCY, &c., I question whether such a DOMINION can be shown from the language of Scripture to be vested in the DEITY himself.*” The only solution the Editor can think of, is that the words,—“*Now if this statement had proceeded from the pen,*” &c., must refer to an extract inserted in the preceding page (244) from Belsham’s *Calm Inquiry*, viz. “—— those expressions which appear to attribute to Christ personal dignity, &c., are wholly FIGURATIVE.” Still that statement is not brought

Besides, as I have observed elsewhere, if the kingdom of Christ be merely the influence of the doctrines which he taught, what are we to understand by the surrender of this kingdom into the hands of the Father, at the close of the proceedings of the last day? It is essential to moral agents to be governed by moral means; the influence and rule of motives must be perpetuated in heaven. The church above are represented as praising and loving and worshipping God, under the influence of the recollection that he redeemed them by the blood of his Son. How then, we ask again, is the kingdom surrendered?

§ 4. THIRDLY.—*I proceed to exhibit the grounds on which this dominion was conferred upon the Lord Jesus Christ.* On this point the statements of the New Testament preclude all doubt. I observe—

First,—that it is not a dominion which essentially belongs to him. Hence he is said to have been appointed, or constituted, heir or possessor of all things (Heb. i. 2); and the name above every name which he possesses to have been given to him (Phil. ii. 9). Hence also he himself, addressing his disciples, said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. xxviii. 18.)

Secondly,—that it was conferred upon him by the Father. It was God who constituted him heir of all things,—and God who gave him the name which is above every name. (Heb. i. 2; Phil. ii. 9.)

Thirdly,—that it was bestowed as the reward of his work. Phil. ii. 5–11: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God,

into the extract as the embodiment of the opinions of this *individual* author, but of a class: nevertheless he is its writer (see *Scripture Testimony*, as above); and, consistently, he ought to have been an Anti-supernaturalist, and believe “*the Christian religion and the gospel history . . . a farce.*”]

thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God so hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Fourthly,—that it was imparted to furnish the means for the accomplishment of his designs of mercy towards an apostate world. He is made head over all things to or for the church, for its benefit. (Ephes. i. 22.)

Objection.—As Jesus Christ is a Divine person, how can power and dominion be imparted to him? How can He who possesses all power, and a right to sovereignty as God, of which nothing can deprive him, receive either by communication? This, Dr. Dwight thinks, is the most plausible argument against the Divinity of Christ; and he proceeds to consider it with particular attention. I cannot say, however, that the fruits of this particular consideration appear to me peculiarly interesting or important. The amount of his statements is that Christ as man, and as Mediator, was capable of exaltation,—that he was exalted in the latter character, and exalted by Him, necessarily so, under whose commission he acted, and to whom he had voluntarily become a servant. To me it appears that the employment of the term "exaltation," in the progress of the discussion, tended to veil, in some measure, the real difficulty from the Doctor's own mind; or at any rate prevented his replying to it so satisfactorily as he might have done. The term exal-

tation is rather indefinite, if not ambiguous. The mere occupancy of a throne cannot give an individual those personal qualities which are essential to the carrying on of the government. And, on the other hand, the mere fact of non-occupancy cannot deprive him of such qualifications. Our Lord, as Mediator, comprised in his complex person all the qualifications requisite to the holding of the reins of universal empire, before he was exalted to it. Power, accordingly, in the ordinary sense of the word, could not be imparted to him; but a right or authority to employ his essential omnipotence in his new character of Mediator, and for the accomplishment of the purposes for which that character was assumed, might be communicated, and actually was so. The exaltation of our Lord then consisted, not in conveying wisdom to one who was omniscient, nor power to one who was omnipotent, but in conferring upon him a legal title to employ these attributes in the new relation he had assumed for the accomplishment of the purposes of eternal mercy.

§ 5. FOURTHLY.—*The manner in which this power or authority is exercised.* To exhibit more clearly the views which I wish to lay before you on this part of the subject, it will be necessary for you to recollect the two separate branches into which the kingdom of Christ divides itself, viz. those of providence and grace, the former being subordinate to the latter. He is said to be the head of his body—the church, and to have been made head over all things to or for the church. It follows therefore, as a necessary consequence, that though the empire of Christ is strictly universal, his mode of exercising his sovereignty in these distinct divisions of that empire may be, and indeed must be, essentially different. In the one case, he rules over an

enlightened and an obedient people; in the other, he employs unconscious and sometimes reluctant agents as the instruments of accomplishing his purposes. Let us then—

First,—consider the manner in which, and the purposes for which, he guides the reins of the kingdom of providence. The object here is I apprehend two-fold. First, to secure the means of bringing certain individuals, included in the number of the chosen to salvation, within the reach and influence of the gospel. This is the instrument by which the conversion of the soul to God is effected. When the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, *i. e.* by the influence of those doctrines which were exhibited in the preaching referred to. To secure the salvation of men, it is accordingly necessary that the Lord Jesus possess the power of bringing those individuals for whom he died, with that speciality of intention to which we have alluded, within the reach and influence of the gospel. But how could he possess this power, if the empire of providence were not entrusted to him? Suppose the case of one of those individuals, living in a country even on which the light of revelation has beamed. He resides, it may be, not far from a place where the gospel is preached in its purity; but, sunk in carelessness, and ignorance, and sensuality, he never thinks of going to hear it. The Bible, it may be, is in his possession; but from the same cause, it is thrown into some obscure corner, and there becomes covered with dust and cob-webs. This is one of those cases which the possession of the government of the world enables the Lord Jesus to meet. For he can cause the hand of his providence to conduct the minister of Divine truth to the very door

of the house in which he resides; or he can cause him to take up the Bible, as if it were by accident, when in search of something to enable him to while away the time which hangs oppressively upon his hands; or he can stretch him upon the bed of languishing, and put to flight all his indifference and carnal security by bringing him to a near view of the eternal world, and thereby inspire a desire to look into that volume which he had formerly despised! But how the soul of this individual and the gospel of our salvation could be brought into contact with each other, were not the government of the world laid upon the shoulders of our exalted Immanuel, it is difficult or impossible to say.

Secondly: the object of the kingdom of providence is to ensure the gradual progress, and ultimate universal diffusion of the gospel throughout the world. It has been frequently observed, that of all the forms of religion which have appeared in the world, Christianity is the only one whose adherents have distinguished themselves by a spirit of proselytism; while there is no form of religion which was likely to encounter such determined and fierce opposition. The exclusive claims to truth which it decidedly avowed—the spirit of holiness which it breathed — the uncompromising attacks which it made upon the pride, and selfishness, and sensuality of the human heart, aroused against it the indignation of men of all ages, and professions, and station, and threw up in its way what seemed a wall of adamant to oppose its progress. Is it not manifest, that if the empire of providence had not been entrusted to the Saviour, his gospel would have made but very slow and imperceptible progress, if indeed it had made any degree of progress at all? That which was disposed to let would have hindered; and this power of the Saviour

could not have been employed in removing it out of the way. The case is different now that the government of the world is laid upon his shoulders. Bearing in his omnipotent hands the sceptre of supreme and universal dominion, he can raise those nations which are disposed to aid in the diffusion of the gospel to high political power and eminence; while others, resolved to employ their influence in retarding its progress, he can dash in pieces "like a potter's vessel." He can turn the council of the destroyer into foolishness, or render his most inveterate enemies the unconscious instruments of accomplishing his will. He can call into existence, and endow with all the requisite qualifications, the instruments he designs to employ, and send them forth into fields ready prepared for their labours. He can prepare the necessary channels in regions the most barren and desolate, and pour along them the sacred current of the water of life, diffusing spiritual beauty and fertility wherever it flows. In short, while he does not infringe on the necessary freedom and accountability of voluntary and accountable agents, he can so direct and control their actions as that all, though they may not think so, shall contribute, more or less, towards the ultimate and universal triumph of the gospel throughout the world. And he not only can, but he actually does do all this. Yes; every step in the providential administration of our exalted Immanuel has been a step in advance towards the glory of unlimited empire. No event has taken place in the world, however stubborn the front it might apparently present, which has not been made to bend and fall into the rank of an auxiliary to this grand and delightful consummation. Nor will the case be otherwise in the days which are to come. The sceptre of providence is still in the hands of our exalted Im-

manuel; and there it will remain, till the entire purpose for which it was entrusted to him shall have been effected—till all nations shall have seen the salvation of God—till the top stone shall have been laid upon the great building of mercy, and all the elect of God shall have been gathered together from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other; and then, when this purpose shall have been attained—when the last battle shall have been fought—the last victory won—the last enemy of the church subdued and destroyed,—then, when all the redeemed of the Lord shall have been brought to that glory which had been afore prepared for them, this empire, held in trust for a specific and an accomplished purpose, shall be surrendered into the hands of his Father, that God may be all in all. “For he must reign,” says the apostle, *i. e.* retain possession of the kingdom of providence, “till he shall have put all enemies under his feet. And when all things shall have been subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

§ 6. *Secondly.*—We shall consider the manner in which the Saviour exercises his power in the second branch of his kingdom—the kingdom of grace. I have said that the empire of providence is subordinate to this. The world is put under his dominion, that the news of salvation may be carried to its inhabitants. The hand of Providence, so to speak, brings the vessels of mercy to be reformed and modelled anew, and made meet for the Master’s use, by the fingers of Divine grace. And the church is put under his dominion that all its members may be brought to glory.

(*First*).—With reference to the chosen to salvation, the power of Christ is exerted in introducing them into

his spiritual kingdom. In order to this, every individual of their number must undergo a new and spiritual birth. The natural birth introduces us into the kingdom of the God of this world—"the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." By nature all men are children of wrath. In order to our translation into the spiritual kingdom of Christ, it is necessary that the hand of Providence bring the gospel to us. But this is not all that is necessary. There is a principle of enmity against God, and consequently against the gospel, which unfolds his character in every human heart previous to conversion to God, which, left to its own natural development, would lead in every case infallibly to the rejection of the gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ therefore exerts his royal prerogative, as the exalted King in Zion, to subdue their enmity, and to change their hearts. The residue of the Spirit is with him. The third person of the adorable Trinity, who, in the economy of redemption, is the source of all illumination and sanctification, and who exerts his saving power under the direction of the Saviour, in consequence of his investiture with the regal dignity, is sent by him to open their hearts to receive the gospel, to turn them from darkness to light, to implant those holy principles within them by which they are led to devote themselves to his glory.

(*Secondly*).—Christ's power is exercised in governing them after their introduction into it. And the sovereignty which he exercises over them is adapted to their nature as moral and accountable agents. It is the government not of physical influence, but of motives adapted to produce rational conviction and cheerful obedience. As the exalted King in Zion, he establishes a system of laws for their observance; and to his au-

thority they are bound to exercise submission,—though to his authority exclusively, for there is no head of the church but Christ. A kingdom containing two heads would be regarded as a monster in the political world: so gross an anomaly as this cannot be conceived to exist in the kingdom of Christ. Its subjects may say, “One is our Master, even Christ; and we are brethren.” There have been men, or bodies of men, who have prescribed doctrines to the faith of their fellow disciples; and interposed, by their authority, to render obligatory practices which the laws of Christ do not themselves enjoin. But all this is a most manifest infringement on the prerogative of the King in Zion. It is an exhibition of the same spirit with that which leads the man of sin to sit down in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God; and it cannot fail to experience the punishment which it deserves. Such an assumption of authority cannot secure obedience to its dictates, without corrupting the very principle of obedience itself; for if Christ be the exclusive head of the church—the only Lord of the conscience, it is manifest that no external observances whatever can be acceptable to him which are not prompted by a sacred regard to his authority, coupled with the desire to promote his glory. In matters purely religious, indeed, there is no authority but Christ,—there is no power whatever which can render the reception of any sentiment, or the practice of any alleged duty, binding upon us. Any being who attempts to do this is an usurper of the throne of Christ; and obedience to him has in it all the guilt of rebellion against our lawful Sovereign.

§ 7. The government of Christ, in consequence of its spiritual nature, does not interfere with the authority or power of temporal sovereigns; it has a different object

in view. It is the design of human legislation to preserve our persons and our possessions—our civil rights and privileges in general—from the hands of aggression and violence. The government of the exalted King of Zions aims at sanctifying our natures, and at making us “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” There can be no clashing of interests, no opposition of orders in the commands issued by our spiritual and our temporal prince; unless indeed the latter should depart from his proper sphere, and invade the province and prerogative of the former,—and then the maxim must be acted on, “It is right to obey God rather than men.”

§ 8. The government of Christ, being spiritual in its nature, is carried on by spiritual means; not by the power of the sword. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” The laws that have been instituted, accompanied as they are with the most powerful motives to operate upon our hopes and our fears, are the instruments of his government — the means by which he obtains and retains that ascendancy in the hearts of the vessels of mercy which leads them in all they do to aim at promoting his glory. By this instrumentality, the Holy Spirit first awakens them to a deep, and lively, and saving impression of the paramount and infinite importance of eternal concerns; and it is by the same instrumentality, by the power of the doctrines, and promises, and threatenings, and prospects of the gospel—the mind being sustained in the spiritual and believing apprehension of this gospel by the sovereign influence of the Holy Spirit—that the Saviour continues to preserve his authority over them, till they are made meet for the enjoyment of himself.

§ 9. (*Thirdly*).—The power of Christ is further exerted in securing their final conquest over all their adversaries. I say “final,” because, for wise purposes, their enemies are permitted occasionally to triumph over them. Satan buffets them; temptations assail them; for a time they are overcome: but though they fall, they shall rise again. “My sheep,” said Christ, “hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” He died to deliver, and he lives to save them; and “if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

It should ever be borne in mind, that nothing can finally triumph over the people of God, without triumphing over their faith. They must be driven from Christ, driven into unbelief, before they can be destroyed. The Lord Jesus can then secure their final conquest over their adversaries in two ways: either, first, by preserving them from those assaults upon their faith and confidence which might be in danger of overthrowing it; or, secondly, by so strengthening their faith that nothing can overturn it. He can prevent our being tired above that we are able; or he can put forth the arm of his power, and kindle within us such a spirit of unhesitating reliance upon his faithfulness, of unconquerable patience, of unflinching firmness, of dauntless courage, and undying ardour, that our adversaries may be ready to regard it as an hopeless expenditure of time and of strength even to make an attack upon us. Having a name given to him at which every creature bows, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, he can easily put an hook in the jaws of the grand enemy him-

self, as in the case of Job. He can ward off disease, and shelter us from the tempestuous visitations of his providence, or preserve us from the fiery trial of temptation; or if he suffer one, or even all of these events to befall us, he can bring our faith out of the trial, as gold out of the crucible seven times purified.

(Fourthly).—Christ's power is exhibited in adjudging to them the rewards of his kingdom at the last day. This is an honour conferred upon him as the reward of his work. “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” For the discharge of this important office, he will come in regal pomp and splendour. The glory and manifestations of that day will outdo in magnificence the most august day our world witnessed since its creation. Our Lord will come “in the glory of his Father,” and in his own “glory, and all the holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory,” and pronounce the final sentence on “all kindreds of the earth,” according to the decisions of his word of truth—THE GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION; he will place upon the heads of God's people the crown of glory, admit them to his own and his Father's presence, and they shall sit down with Him in his kingdom for ever and ever.

(Finally).—Christ will appear as the glorified head of his body—the church—throughout eternity. He will surrender the kingdom of providence into the hands of the Father at last, that God may be all in all. He will no longer require to act as the priest of his people; but he will not relinquish the relation in which he stands to them as their elder brother, their chief, their prince, their KING. Our nature has been taken into a state of eternal union with the second person in the Triune Je-

hovah. The unrivalled honour which this circumstance will reflect on that part of the family above, which is redeemed from amongst men, may well cause them to forget their original “low estate.” The visible distinction of Christ, as the illustrious King as well as Deliverer of countless myriads, whom he redeemed by his blood, and brought by his power from the lowest depths of degradation to share his triumphs, will augment the glories of the great REDEEMER himself.

[FIFTH SERIES.]

MISCELLANEOUS LECTURES.



LECTURE I.

PROVIDENCE.

Definition of the term:—the object of Divine providence:—the universe under the superintendence of, proved:—its extent—all things, events, and creatures:—state and circumstances of men:—actions, fortuitous and voluntary, under the control of God's universal providence.

§ 1. THE term itself (from the Latin *provideo*, “to foresee,”) denotes “foresight, timely care, forecast, the act of providing.” A man who does not look before him, and endeavour to secure what is necessary for the supply of his own wants, as well as the wants of those who are dependent upon him, is distinguished by “improvidence.” A provident man is one who anticipates the wants of the day before they recur, that he may be able to meet and supply them as they arise; and providence is the abstract quality,—it is the temper and conduct by which such an individual is characterized. There is nothing in the word itself to limit its application to the foresight and care of God: yet as that is the grandest and noblest manifestation of providence, the term is now used emphatically to denote “the care of God over created beings; or that system of Divine superintend-

ence by means of which the order and harmony of the universe are preserved, and all the purposes of the Divine will are accomplished."

Our remarks on this subject may be comprised under the following heads. We shall, *first*, state the general object of Divine providence; *secondly*, prove the fact that the universe is under the superintendence of Divine providence; *thirdly*, examine the extent to which this Divine superintendence reaches; and *fourthly*, explain in what manner its intentions are accomplished.

§ 2. FIRST.—*We are to state the general object of Divine providence.* I mean by this, for what purpose is the Divine superintendence of the universe exerted? And I answer—

First,—to preserve in existence all the beings and worlds which have been brought into being by Divine power. Hence God is said to uphold “all things by the word of his power.” In him also, it is further said, “we live, and move, and have our being.”

Secondly,—to direct and govern them, so that the purposes of the great Eternal in their formation may be accomplished. It cannot be doubted, that the grand and ultimate purpose for which the universe was created was the manifestation or promotion of the Divine glory. To secure this object, both support and government are necessary. The universe must be upheld, and every motion both of inanimate and animate creation must be directed; or these not only might, but certainly would be a failure, as to the accomplishment of the object for which it was brought into being.

§ 3. SECONDLY.—*We are to prove the fact that the universe is under the superintendence of Divine providence.* Of this fact reason supplies us with ample evidence. From this source, we learn that the state and circum-

stances of created existences, as well as the honour of God, require that it should be so.

First.—The state and circumstances of created existences require that the universe should be under the superintendence of Divine providence. The weakness and dependence of the creature render it necessary; for as it is essential to the very idea of a creature that it has derived existence from God, so it is of the very nature of derived existence to need perpetual support. None but an infinite being—a being who exists by necessity of nature—can be independent, or self-sufficient for its own support. That which does not necessarily exist, in the first moment when it began to be, does not and cannot necessarily exist any one moment after its creation; but owes its continued existence, through each successive moment, to that energy which produced it. It is palpably absurd to suppose that a single fragment of the universe would escape sinking into the vortex of annihilation, were Divine support withdrawn. I know the contrary of this has been maintained; but by no man of intelligence, whose judgment, with reference to this point at least, was not pitifully blinded by opinions previously formed. Not to need Divine support is to be independent, *i.e.* to possess an attribute of Divinity. And as one Divine attribute cannot be separated from the rest, if the universe does not need support, it would follow that the universe must be omniscient, omnipotent, infinite, eternal, &c., *i.e.* must be God.

Further: the ignorance and perversity of the creature render it necessary. The ultimate object of God in putting forth his creating power was, as we have seen, to promote his glory; he can have no other object in view, in permitting the beings and worlds formed by him to retain, for a time, the existence he originally im-

parted. But how could any part of creation promote the Divine glory, if it were left to its own management and direction? A very considerable portion of created existence is utterly destitute of will and intelligence; it is dead, inert matter. To secure a revenue of glory from such materials, they must manifestly be under the guidance of infinite wisdom.

Another branch of this universe of beings, viz. man, possesses intellect indeed; but it is beclouded by sin. It calls good, evil; and evil, good. It puts darkness for light, and light for darkness. It uses not its feeble taper in devising means for promoting the Divine glory, but obscuring it. The perversity of the creature here renders it necessary that the universe should be under the superintendence of Divine providence; for the glory which God derives from fallen man is the result of omnipotent power and infinite wisdom, guiding their actions to an end which they designed to subvert and destroy.

And if the remaining part of the universe, viz. holy angels, and sanctified men, possess intellect, in union with moral excellence,—if they burn with an ardour ever so bright and glowing to promote the honour of their Creator,—still they need a rule to walk by, they need guidance and government; or through the necessarily limited nature of their perception, they may sully the lustre of those very perfections which they desire to display and glorify. The consequences of actions are at times so greatly beyond the calculation of created intellect—the paths which lead ultimately to that blessed point to which all the actions of moral agents should tend are sometimes so divergent, that even the highest archangel might occasionally err, and fail in the great purposes of his being, if all worlds, and all creatures,

and all the actions of creatures, were not under the superintendence of Divine providence.

Secondly.—The honour of God requires that the universe should be placed under the direction of Divine providence. I mean, that having created the worlds of matter and of mind, it does not appear to us that it would be honourable to him to cast them off without his support and guidance and blessing. What parent ever derived honour from abandoning his child? and what is the universe but the creature of God, needing his fostering care, and waiting upon him, as the eyes of children are directed to their parents, for all needful communications?

Besides if the universe were able to retain its existence without constant Divine support, *i. e.* without the constant influence of Divine providence, which however we have seen is not the case, how many opportunities would Jehovah lose for developing his character, and exhibiting the glory of his perfections, by not exerting over it the constant superintendence of his providence! This argument holds good, whatever is conceived to be the final end of the creation of the world. If that end were the bestowment of good upon his creatures, can it be supposed that he who formed them, upon this supposition, to render them happy, would immediately on their creation leave them to their fate, and abandon all the opportunities afforded by their prolonged existence for securing the great purpose of their being? It is incredible. Or if his object in their creation were, as we believe, the promotion of his own glory, a similar question, with even yet more effect, may be asked,—Who can believe that Jehovah created the world to show forth his glory, if he does not assume the office of the Governor of the world, and so guide and direct

everything to this end? There is then abundant support for the established enthymeme, that “if there be a God, the world is governed by providence.” The same reasons which impelled him to create, impel him also to govern the world. And upon the whole, we need not hesitate to adopt the language of Turretine. “*Si Deus non curat mundum, id propterit fit, vel quia nescit, vel quia non potest, vel quia non vult: sed quomodo hoc dici posset sine summa in Deum blasphemia, cum et sapientissimus sit, qui omnia, et omnibus prospicit; et potentissimus, cui nihil est ἀδύνατον; et optimus, qui ut summā bonitatē mundum primò creavit; ita non potest non eadem mundum creatum conservare et regere?*”*

Further: of the fact that the universe is under the superintendence of Divine providence, *experience* or observation, as well as reason, supplies us with ample evidence. “There are,” says Fletcher, “actual proofs of government in the natural world. By government we mean the orderly administration of laws. Now there are laws by which natural causes act, and according to which the operations of nature are conducted. These operations are various, yet uniform; diversified, yet harmonious; complicated, yet regular. All the classifications of science, and all the indications of experience and observation, proceed on this principle of order and regularity.” Such laws and provisions must proceed from some origin. Some intelligent, thinking, powerful

* *i. e.* Freely rendered—“If God does not govern the world, it is because of ignorance, or a want of ability or of will. But how can this be said, without the highest blasphemy against God, since he who is thoroughly acquainted with all things, and in all, must be infinitely wise [*sapientissimus—MOST WISE*], and he to whom nothing is impossible must have infinite power; and as he who created the world at first did so from the highest kind of goodness, so does not he, under the influence of the same goodness, preserve and govern the world when brought into existence?”

being made and settled these arrangements. Only that Being who formed the universe could establish them; and there is no other being who is not subject to them. They cannot be self-established; for that would imply the self-motive and self-existent power of dependent existences. There is neither philosophy nor religion in supposing that an inherent plastic power resides in what is called nature.

Such is briefly the support which the general doctrine of providence derives from sources independent of Divine revelation. I must not, however, pass over this branch of the subject without referring you to the testimony which the inspired volume brings to it.

In our general description of providence, we have said that providence sustains and governs. In confirmation of the first, we may appeal to such passages as the following. Of the second person of the adorable Trinity—and it is of no consequence to our present argument which of the persons of the Godhead is represented as the agent—it is said that “*by him all things consist,*” or remain in the state and obey the laws originally impressed upon them,—that he upholds “all things by the word of his power.” In God, it is declared, “we live, and move, and have our being:” and everything necessary for the support of that being flows from his parental care; for the eyes of all flesh wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season. The very hairs of our head are all numbered; and not a sparrow can fall to the ground without our Father.

With reference to the government of providence, it is said of God that “he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.” Even insensible matter is under his control. Fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy wind, fulfil

his word; and with reference to intelligent agents, we are told that he maketh the most refractory, even the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he does restrain. In short—for on this point I cannot enlarge—the whole of the Bible exhibits Jehovah as so ordering the affairs of individuals, and of nations, as to secure the grand purpose he had in view in creating the world,—viz. the promotion of his own glory, in the salvation of a multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues. One of the most prominent distinctions between Divine revelation and ordinary history is, that when the same general events are narrated, the latter exhibits (it is its province so to do,—it is not able indeed to do more,) the agency of man; the former, the agency of God. Profane history exhibits the instruments by which Jehovah works: the finger of Divine revelation points to the unseen but almighty hand which wields and guides the instrument, and causes even Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Jews and the people of Israel, to do what the hand and the council of God determined before to be done.

§ 4. THIRDLY.—*We proceed to investigate the extent to which this Divine superintendence reaches.* With reference to this point, it is not too much to say that the providence of God has relation to all beings, and to all events; to creatures animate and inanimate; to good and bad angels; to good and bad men, and to all their actions: for his throne is in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. There is not an operation in nature, whether it be in harmony with, or in violation of, the ordinary laws according to which physical events take place, in which his providence is not concerned. Whether the spring delights us by its freshness, or the autumn by its

profusion and maturity,—whether the sun rises or sets,—whether the moon withdraws its shining, or pours over the world its soft and gentle light,—whether the skies are all serene, and the air all salubrious,—or whether the heavens gather blackness, and the tempest howls, and the thunder rolls, and the lightnings play, and the fierce and sweeping tornado spreads around us universal desolation, is to be ascribed to the providence of Him who originally made all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created.

There is, further, not one of the meanest of his creatures to the care of which the providence of God does not descend. “As the sun’s light, so God’s providence disdains not the meanest worms.” It has been observed, that in the enumeration of the works of creation, only the great whales and small creeping things are mentioned, and not the intermediate creatures; to show that the least as well as the greatest are under his care. It is one of his titles to be the preserver of beasts, as well as of men. He is the great caterer for all creatures. The young lions seek their meat from him. They attend him for their daily portion; and what they gather and meet with, in their pursuit, is God’s gift to them. He listens to the cry of the young ravens, though they are birds of prey. He gives to the beast his food, and the young ravens when they cry. Psalm civ. contains a lecture on the doctrine of providence. It sets before us the providence of God throughout the world. It presents to our view the great Eternal operating upon the creatures of his power, according to a law imprinted on their natures, and causing them to observe exactly the statutes he has enacted for their guidance. He sendeth forth his command upon the earth; and his word, *i. e.* of providence, runs very swiftly. He preserves all things in their sta-

tions, and in the observance of the laws he originally gave to them. “They continue this day,” says the psalmist, “according to thy ordinances; for all are thy servants,” —*i.e.* the earth, and what is upon it.

§ 5. It is more interesting, however, to observe that the providence of God extends to everything which relates to the human race—to the state and circumstances of men, and to the actions of men.

First.—To the state and circumstances of men. The care of Providence commences with our birth; and it is especially exercised during the years of infancy. “Thou art he,” said the psalmist, “that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breast. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.” (Psalm xxii. 9, 10.) It is the providence of God which provides so suitable a nourishment for the infant immediately on its coming into the world, and infuses so tender an attachment towards it in the bosoms of those to whom the care of it is immediately entrusted, as to lead the prophet to say, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?”

Providence appoints the station we are to occupy in society—the rank in which we move. It fixes the bounds of our habitations. It extends to the professions we choose—the trades we follow—the measure of public countenance we obtain—the success with which we are favoured. It determines the degree and the kind of trials which shall fall to our lot—the measure of sickness or of health, of wealth or of poverty, of kindness or of enmity, we are to experience. And it decides, finally, concerning the term of our continuance in the present life: whether we shall sink into our graves, while our breasts are full of milk, and our bones moistened with

marrow; or in the bitterness of our soul, never eating of pleasure.

The hand of Divine providence is especially worthy of our attention in whatever relates to our spiritual and eternal welfare. And here, as it has been well remarked, there are some footsteps of Providence which have a more immediate subserviency to the conversion of men; particularly their being placed under the means of grace, either bringing the gospel to them, or ordering their abode where it is preached,—and that in such a way as is most adapted to awaken, instruct, convert, or reprove, as means conducive to that great end. Moreover, it is to be recognised in casting our lot where we may contract friendship and intimacy with those whose conversation and example may be made of use to us, for our conviction, imitation, or conversion.

And to this it may be added, that sometimes the hand of God is especially displayed in sending afflictions, which are sanctified, and rendered means of grace, and have a tendency to awaken men out of their carnal security. This is one way whereby God speaks to man, to withdraw him from his purpose, and to hide pride from him. Sometimes God makes his exemplary judgments, that are abroad in the world, effectual to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. And as to the preaching of the gospel, there is a peculiar hand of Providence sometimes in giving a suitable word, in which case God often overrules the thoughts and studies of his ministers; so that they are, as it were, directed without their own forethought, relating to this event, to insist on such a subject that God designs to make instrumental for the conversion of souls. Thus he sets home on the consciences of men, keeps it fixed on the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts, and enables

them to improve it to his glory in the conduct of their lives.

Secondly.—Providence extends to all the actions of men. There are only two classes of actions which I would specify at this time: they are fortuitous or accidental, and voluntary.

1. The providence of God extends to fortuitous actions. There is no such thing as chance. “What is casual to us,” says Charnock, “is ordained by God. God never leaves second causes to struggle and act in a vagabond way; though the effect seems to us to be a loose act of the creature, yet it is directed by a superior cause to a higher end than we imagine. The whole disposing of the lot which is cast into the lap is from the Lord. A soldier shoots an arrow at random, and God guides it to be the executioner of Ahab for his sin; which death had been foretold by Micaiah. God gives us a certain rule to judge of such contingencies: ‘And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand.’ (Exod. xxi. 13.) A man accidentally kills another, but it is done by a secret commission from God: God delivered him into his hand.”

2. Providence extends to all voluntary actions. To good actions; not by compelling, but inclining the will. It constrains not a man to good against his will, but powerfully moves the will to do that by consent which God had determined shall be done. *The way of man is not in himself.* The motion is man’s,—the action is man’s; but the direction is from God. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” To evil actions; in permitting, restraining, and so directing and governing him, as that they ultimately issue in the Divine glory. Hence Joseph said to his brethren, when he made himself known to them in the land of Egypt, “And God

sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither but God." (Gen. xlvi. 7, 8.) In like manner, it is said of Pharoah that the Lord hardened his heart,—that he made the heart of Sihon king of Heshbon obstinate, that he might deliver him into the hand of Israel. It is further declared, that the Lord put a lying spirit into the mouth of all the prophets that deceived Ahab. And of Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Jews, it is declared that they were gathered together to do whatsoever God's counsel had determined before to be done. These passages, in connection with various others of the same general character, are sufficient to prove that the providence of God has some concern even with the sinful actions of men. What that concern is will be more fully made to appear in a subsequent lecture.

LECTURE II.

PROVIDENCE.

(CONTINUED.)

The manner in which providential designs are accomplished:—the connection of God's providence with physical changes:—the universe not a machine, and its changes the result of laws, and indirectly of the agency of God:—the opinion that every change is not from the operation of laws, but from the direct agency of God:—the difficulties involved in these opposite views, stated:—particular providence, not affected by:—the connection of providence with the voluntary actions of men:—its agency necessary to all physical acts irrespective of the moral character:—the prosperity of the wicked supplies the grand objection to the idea that the world is governed by the providence of the righteous God.

§ 1. THE only remaining topic of discussion with reference to the great doctrine of providence is—

FOURTHLY,—*to state the manner in which the providential designs of God are accomplished; or, the manner in which Divine agency is exerted to secure the accomplishment of the Divine purpose.*

This is a subject of considerable importance, and far, very far indeed, from being unattended with difficulty. That Jehovah has some concern in those vast and complicated changes which constitute the phenomena of the material world is admitted by all who are not atheists

in reality, whatever they may be in profession. But what is the precise nature of that agency, it is by no means so easy to determine. This is the point to which I shall direct your attention in the present lecture. In farther discussing this subject, I shall endeavour to ascertain, first, what concern the providence of God has with the physical changes which we perpetually see around us; and secondly, what with regard to the voluntary actions of men.

§ 2. *First.*—What concern Divine providence has with the physical changes—the varying and shifting phenomena of the material universe,—changes which take place among the objects of which it consists,—changes from motion to rest, from rest to motion, from barrenness to fertility, from fertility to barrenness, &c. Now how are these changes produced? Is it by the direct energy of the great First Cause?—by the aid of some mechanical principle of operation? or through the instrumentality of certain powers and properties which the Creator has impressed upon matter? And if the latter should be affirmed to be the case, how does the power of the great First Cause unite with the derived power of second causes, so as to give birth to all the phenomena of the material universe? There are some who conceive of the universe as a vast machine, with all its parts so nicely adapted to each other as to be at once capable of deriving motion from, and communicating motion to the adjacent parts. Of this machine they admit that God was the author; and if he has any concern in producing the motion of its various parts, they conceive him somewhat in the light of a main-spring. It would not be honourable to him, they think, to suppose that every minute and subordinate wheel receives its motion directly from him. He communicates the first grand

impulse; and that impulse, by a train of mechanism, reaches throughout the whole extent of the system.

The sentiment I have endeavoured to describe appears to me to be without foundation in fact. There are but few phenomena of the physical world that afford it the slightest countenance; and there is not a single fact, I will venture to assert, that can be accounted for on mechanical principles alone. There is indeed something like mechanism in the construction of the human body. Its contrivances are mechanical contrivances. The construction of the joints, and the position and actions of the muscles, are of this kind. The muscles are mechanical powers; and they operate according to the recognised laws of mechanism. But after all, there is more than mechanism even here. If, when the muscle contracts, the motion of the bone to which it is attached should be allowed to be mechanical, what shall we say to the contraction of the muscle itself? By what law of mechanism shall we account for that? And if the principles of mechanics fail us here, how much less aid may we expect to derive from them when we reflect upon the mysterious fact, that muscular attraction is obedient to the volition of the mind? And what is there at all analogous to mechanic agency in the motions of the planets—the production and growth of animals and vegetables, &c.? “It is utterly inconceivable, that works of such stupendous art, as the constant and regular productions of the bodies of vegetables and animals, should be derived from laws, such as those to which we have now referred, implanted at the creation, in dead matter. Every new vegetable and animal is a new production of Divine power; and it is just as possible that they should arise into existence at first, without that agency, as afterwards.”

§ 3. The universe then is not a clock, or a watch. The changes which it exhibits are not to be resolved into mere mechanical operations. It is true they take place in an uniform undeviating manner,—a circumstance which enables us to lay all our plans with reference to futurity. They obey, in this respect, certain laws, *i. e.* the same antecedents are uniformly followed by the same consequents. But laws are not causes, or agents; power does not reside in them, or emanate from them. They are merely rules, by which, or according to which, actual agency exerts its power. We might with as much propriety say, that the laws which mark the progress of certain diseases are the extinguishers of life, as that the laws of nature are the causes of the events which take place in the material world. And yet it is surprising how prone we are to ascribe real efficiency to these laws, and to conceive of them as operating in the production of the changes we see around us, rather than as rules, according to which the great First Cause himself operates. The laws of nature are only a summary description of the antecedents and consequents which are invariably found in connection with one another.

Amongst those who discard the idea of mechanism, there are many who imagine that all the changes we see around us, *i. e.* that all the phenomena of nature, are the results of certain powers and properties impressed upon matter by the great Eternal. According to this view of the matter, Divine energy is no further concerned in the production of these phenomena, than in sustaining those powers or properties from which they immediately spring. The second cause, on this scheme, has efficiency to produce the effects with which it is connected, *i. e.* it has derived efficiency; and this derived efficiency is

in fact the immediate cause of all the changes which take place in the material world: but the great First Cause sustains this efficiency. It is not, for instance, they think, by the direct energy of God that the muscles of the human body contract; but by some power over them, which the Creator has bestowed upon the will of man. In like manner, it is not by the direct agency of God that the earth is carried round the sun in a certain orbit; but by the immediate influence of two powers, which the Creator has impressed upon matter, whose combined operation produces the very motion required.

§ 4. There are others who maintain, on the contrary, that God is the operator, so to speak, in every event which takes place,—that it is by a direct exertion of his power that the muscle contracts in obedience to volition, and that the earth is moved forward in its orbit round the sun. According to this sentiment, God is in fact, with reference to physical events at least, the only agent in the universe. Second causes are not, in strict accuracy of expression, causes at all. They possess no efficiency, in the ordinary sense of the word at least, either derived or underived. They are only antecedents to certain consequences. They are signs, so to speak, that certain events will follow; but they possess no necessary connection with them. They are not the producers of them, even in the sense of instruments. They are connected together by the will of God; but they only exist in union,—because God has determined that when the first event takes place, he will invariably exert his power to originate the second, which we call the effect.

§ 5. I cannot say that I am prepared to give an opinion with reference to these conflicting statements. I see great difficulties on either side,—difficulties so great

that my judgment is in a state of suspense. On the one hand, I see the difficulty of conceiving of what are called physical or second causes otherwise than as antecedents merely. I see the difficulty of supposing that efficiency, in any sense in which the word is ordinarily understood, should be communicated to them. I cannot understand derived efficiency; nor how active powers or properties should be imparted to dead, inert matter. When it is said that two particles of matter in free space approach each other, in consequence of the mutual power of attraction which they possess, I own that, if the words are intended to convey more than the bare fact itself, or that such will invariably be the result, I know not, I can form no conception of what it is, more than this which they do express, or were intended to express. I am free to acknowledge that I can as easily conceive of matter possessing the power of sensation and thought, as the power of attraction, in the sense in which the term "power" is generally used; and that of the powers of matter in general, as they are called, I find it difficult to form any other notion than that some events are connected with other events by the will and power of God; so that, in fact, God is the direct agent in every event which takes place in the material world. At the same time, I am not insensible to the weight of the arguments which are brought against this opinion by a late able writer and metaphysician, whose words I now quote.

"But God the Creator, and God the Providential Governor of the world, are not necessarily God the immediate producer of every change. In that great system which we call the universe, all things are what they are, in consequence of his primary will; but if they were wholly incapable of affecting anything, they would virtually themselves be as nothing." "Even while

material objects are themselves reciprocally productive, as well as susceptible of change, it may be said, in one sense of the word, that God is the author of all the changes that take place; for it was in order that they might be antecedents of the very changes which are consequent on their presence, that he formed them with the powers or qualities which those changes are believed by us to exhibit. But it is in this sense only that God is the author of them; and to suppose that he is himself the real operator, and the only operator of every change, is to suppose that the universe which he has made exists for no purpose." In stating the doctrine which he opposes, he adds, "According to this doctrine, it is God, and God alone, who, when light is present, affects our minds with vision; it is He, and he alone, who, when we will to raise our arm, produces the necessary contractions of the muscles." And in opposing this statement, he says, "The production of so simple a state as that of vision, or any other of the modes of perception, with an apparatus which is not merely complicated, but in all its complication absolutely without efficiency of any sort, is so far from adding any sublimity to the Divine nature in our conception, that it can scarcely be conceived by the mind, without lessening in some degree the sublimity of the author of the universe, by lessening, or rather destroying all the sublimity of the universe which he has made. What is that idle mass of matter which cannot affect us, or be known to us, or to any other created being, more than if it were not? If the Deity produces, in every case, by his own immediate operation, all those feelings which we term sensations or perceptions, he does not first create a multitude of inert and cumbrous worlds, invisible, and incapable of affecting anything whatever, that he may know when to

operate, in the same manner as he would have operated though they did not exist." And again he states, that "the changes which take place, whether in mind or in matter, are all ultimately resolvable into the will of the Deity, who formed alike the spiritual and material system of the universe,—that as the Creator of the world, and the Willer of those great ends which the laws of the universe accomplish, God is himself the author of the physical changes that take place in it, is most true." "But however deeply we may be impressed with these truths, we cannot find in them any reason for supposing that the objects without us, which he has made surely for some end, have, as made by him, no efficacy, no power of being instrumental to his own great purpose, merely because whatever power they can be supposed to possess must have been derived from the fountain of all power."

The extracts which I have given you are taken from Dr. Brown's *Essay on Cause and Effect*,—a work of singular acuteness, but less satisfactory to me than his volumes on *Mental Philosophy*, in consequence of what I cannot avoid conceiving several self-contradictory statements which it contains. Even the extracts I have given appear to me to oppose the leading design and sentiments of the work; yet are they very powerful in opposition to the opinion I have, I acknowledge, been wont to cherish,—the opinion that God is the immediate producer of every change which takes place in the material world, as it keeps that Deity always in view as the great connecting principle among all the various phenomena which we observe. I would not be understood as passing any judgment upon this difficult question; it is perhaps enough to know that every change in the universe takes place through the providential influ-

ence of God, whether that influence be directly exerted in every individual movement, or whether through the instrumentality of certain powers and properties impressed by him upon the material creation.

§ 6. The decision of this question does not at all affect the question of a particular providence. If God, indeed, is the immediate producer of every change, all providences must be particular, and equally particular. There is no essential and characteristic difference between the ordinary and extraordinary operations of Providence, between every-day events and miracles. All the distinction is, that in the former case God acts according to certain rules of operation; and in the latter against them: still, on this scheme, it is God that acts in both cases, and God exclusively. Or if God is not the immediate producer of every change—if the intentions of Divine providence are carried into effect through the instrumentality of certain powers and properties impressed by him upon matter, still it should be contended that every single instance of the operation of these powers, throughout the entire extent of the universe, and the whole duration of time, was provided for by God; and that the particular power by which each particular event is brought to pass was given to the agent endowed by it, for the express purpose of giving birth to that event, in connection with all others which flow from its operation. One or other representation is, I apprehend, the true notion of a particular providence, *i. e.* a providence embracing every particular event; of which there can be no doubt, when it is said, “The very hairs of your heads are all numbered;” and that a sparrow cannot fall on the ground without our Father.

There is a very common and false notion of a particular providence, which is very correctly stated and

ably exploded by Mr. [Dr.] Fletcher. "Some," says he, "have maintained that general laws are established, by the operation of which the general order and harmony of the universe are preserved; but that Providence, in cases of particular emergency, interferes in such a way as to suspend this general course, in order to accomplish events for which the general plan had made no provision. This," he adds, "is the notion which many have of a particular providence, as if it were nothing more than an exemption to [or a suspension of] the general and established rule; by which means they virtually confound what is thus particular with what is miraculous." Fletcher very properly adds, that this sentiment impeaches the foreknowledge of God; or he might have added, it throws a reflection upon those general laws, by which, according to this statement, the operations of his providence are carried on. It supposes that they are so inadequate and imperfect—so defective, if not mistaken, in their reach and influences—that God must stand by, so to speak, to witness their operation, to supply their defects, and to correct their mistakes: and thus it offers a compliment to God at the expense of his providential laws; or rather, as to derogate from the latter is to impeach the wisdom of the former, by whom they were instituted, it libels and insults the God of heaven. We pass on—

§ 7. *Secondly*,—to investigate the concern which Divine providence has with the voluntary actions of men, or with the conduct of rational and accountable creatures. Here we may observe generally, that these actions to which we now allude, consisting as they do in a series of changes, must be, in common with all other actions, the result of Divine energy, either direct or indirect. Accordingly we find the Sacred Scriptures

exhibiting all actions as within the range of the operation of Divine providence. With reference to one class of moral actions, viz. good actions, there is no difficulty whatever. That the providence of God should be concerned with them—that Divine energy should even originate them—may be admitted; nay, the admission only serves to enhance our conceptions of the Divine glory. It is only when we begin to think of evil actions that we experience any difficulty. How can Divine providence be concerned in them? how can they be the result of Divine agency, either direct or indirect, without making God the author of sin?

It will be found impossible to answer this question, I imagine, without determining previously what is the formal nature of sin, or endeavouring to analyze what we denominate an act of sin. “All acts of sin are capable of being resolved into two constituent parts. In analyzing such acts, we find something physical and positive; and something moral and privative. Now the moral guilt with which such actions are chargeable does not attach to that part which is physical and positive, but to that which is moral and privative. This analysis of sin into its physical and moral parts is sometimes denominated by systematic divines the *pure act*, and the *sinfulness of the act*. As a pure act, it is only the exertion of natural faculties which God has implanted; its sinfulness results from its non-conformity with the perfect standard of moral duty.”* “No sin,” says Charnock, “doth properly consist in the act itself, as an act, but in the deficiency of that act from the rule. No action wherein there is sin but may be done as an action, though not as an irregular action. Killing a man is not in itself unlawful; for then no magistrate should

* Fletcher.

execute a malefactor for killing another, and justice would cease in the world: man also must divest himself of all thoughts of preserving his life against an invader. But to kill a man without just cause, without authority, without rule, contrary to rule, out of revenge, is unlawful. So that it is not the act, as an act, is the sin; but the swerving of that act from the rule makes it a sinful act. So speaking, as speaking, is not sin, for it is a power and act God hath endowed us with; but speaking irreverently and dishonourably of God, or falsely and slanderously of men, or any otherwise irregularly, therein the sin lies. So that it is easy to conceive that an act, and the viciousness of it, are separable. That act which is the same in kind with another may be laudable, and the other base and vile, in respect of its circumstances." Thus Theophilus Gale states,— "All thoughts, words, and actions, considered physically and abstractedly, without regard to their moral determination by the law and will of God, are neither good nor evil; for morality is a mode not physically or intrinsically inherent in human acts, but appendant to them from the determination of the Divine law. The very acts of loving and hating God, considered in their generic, physic, and entitative nature, as abstracted from the moral relation they have to their object, are morally neither good nor evil; because moral *bonitate* and *vitiositate* are differences of human acts, merely accidental or modal, as all the schoolmen grant."

Bearing in mind, then, this distinction between the act and the sinfulness of the act, I observe, with Charnock, that "God supports the faculties wherewith a man sinneth, and supports a man in that act wherein he sinneth, but concurs not to the sinfulness of that act. The concurrence of God is with reference to the act; the

sinfulness of that act is purely from the inherent corruption of the creature: as the power and act of seeing is communicated to the eye by the soul; but the seeing doubly or dimly is from the viciousness of the organ, the eye. And again, God moves the will; but its particular direction will be according to its nature. When a man flings several things out of his hands which are of various figures, the motion is from the agent, but the variety of their motions is from their own figure and frame. The power of action is from God; but the viciousness of that action from our own nature. As when a clock or watch has some fault in any of the wheels, the man that winds it up, or, putting his hand upon the wheels, moves them, he is the cause of the motion; but it is the flaw in it, or deficiency of something, that is the cause of its erroneous motion. That error was not from the person that made it, or the person that winds it up, and sets it on going, but from some other cause; yet, till it be mended, it will not go otherwise, so long as it is set upon motion. Our motion is from God. In him we move; but not the disorder of that motion. It is," he adds, in rather coarse, but very expressive language, "the foulness of a man's stomach at sea is the cause of his sickness, and not the pilot's government of the ship."

§ 8. The exertion of providential agency is essential to the performance of all acts, whatever be their moral character. The tongue could not move, either to praise or blaspheme God, without Divine influence; and therefore whenever the tongue actually does move—and we may make the same affirmation with reference to all other actions—it moves either by the direct or indirect agency of the great First Cause. The particular purpose for which it moves depends not upon the agency by which it moves, but upon the volition of the mind.

And since it is necessary to accountability, that the power of motion should follow the volition, that power is always imparted, whatever be the moral character of the volition itself. If that character be morally bad, it is not to be ascribed to God; he did not infuse the wrong desire—the impure or rebellious volition. Let no man say when he is tempted, “I am tempted of God.” “God created the grape,” says Charnock, “and filled the vine with a sprightliness; but he doth never infuse a drunken frame into a man, or excite it. Providence presents us with the wine, but the precept is to use it soberly. Can God be blamed, if that which is good, in itself, be turned into poison by others? No more than the flower can be called a criminal, because the spider’s nature turns that into venom which is sweet in itself. Though it is by God’s permission that we can do evil, yet it is not by his inspiration that we will to do evil: that is wholly from ourselves.”

With respect to the origin of this sinful volition, a few words more may be necessary. It is sufficiently evident that the sinful direction of actions results from sinful volitions; but as the providence of God extends to the thoughts, as well as to the actions of men, are not these sinful volitions to be ascribed to him? To this point also, as it appears to me, we may carry the mode of reasoning which, as we have seen, Charnock and others employed with so much success, with reference to the actions of men,—an argument, indeed, which is incomplete in their hands, because it was not pushed to its legitimate extent. With reference to volitions, there is the pure act, and the sinfulness of the act. God is the author of the former; but not of the latter. It is as necessary to accountability that we should possess the power of volition, when an object appears desirable to

us, as of acting when we will to act; and therefore Divine providence sustains the power of volition in such circumstances. The wrong bias of the volition is to be traced ultimately to a merely privative cause—to the native want of those positive principles of holiness which Adam possessed, but lost by the fall; of which deficiency of positive holiness God is no more the cause, though it necessarily results from the punitive withdrawal of Divine and sovereign influence, than the departure of the sun can be said to be the cause of darkness. On the full discussion of this subject, however, I cannot now enter. The amount of what has been said is, that Divine providence is concerned both in the volitions and the conduct of men, in so far as to secure by its agency the pure act, but not the sinfulness of the act.

§ 9. The grand objection against supposing the world to be governed by Providence is taken from the prosperity of the wicked, on the one hand; and the adversity and affliction of God's people, on the other. This has been a stumbling-block to many. The steps of Asaph had well nigh slipped, while contemplating the present aspect of the world in this respect. Jeremiah also, though fixed in the acknowledgment of God's righteousness, would debate the reason of it with God. "Righteous art thou, O Lord; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" I give you the substance of Charnock's reply to this objection.

1. It is high presumption for ignorance to judge of God's proceedings.

2. God is the Sovereign of the world. He has a right to do what he will with his own.

3. God is wise and just, and knows how to distribute.

4. There is a necessity for some seeming inequality, at least, in order to the good government of the world. And we may add, necessity that the wicked should enjoy good, in order to the development of character; so that the justice of the decisions of the great day may be manifest.

5. Unequal dispensations do not argue carelessness.

6. The inequality is not so great as complained of.

It is not well with bad men here. They are tortured by their own lusts—have a great account to make, and know not how to make it,—they are the worse for what they have, and are reserved for the infliction of justice.

Neither is it bad here with good men, if all be well considered. Adversity cannot be called absolutely an evil, as prosperity may be called absolutely a good. The only absolutely bad thing in the world is sin. Adversity may be a good. God never leaves good men so destitute, but that he provides for their necessity. The little which good men have is better than the riches of many wicked. No righteous man would, in his right mind, be willing to make an exchange of his smartest afflictions for a wicked man's prosperity, with all the circumstances attending it. The righteous have great advantage by their afflictions—sensible experience of the tender providence of God over them—abundant consolations under them. They produce inward improvement. They prepare for future glory.

Finally: this argument is stronger upon the infallible righteousness of God's nature, for a day of reckoning after this life, than against providence. It proves, not that there is not a God who judgeth in the earth, but that there will come a day of reckoning, when deserved vengeance will overtake the workers of iniquity.

LECTURE III.

SANCTIFICATION.

Meaning of the term:—nature of sanctification:—extends to the powers of the mind, progressive, completed when delivered from the body:—the cause of,—the word of God and the Holy Spirit:—the tendency of this view:—importance and necessity of sanctification,—it was Christ's design,—usefulness dependent on,—necessary for admission into heaven.

§ 1. THE radical signification of the Greek term translated “to sanctify,” viz. “to separate,” has given occasion to its being used in two very different senses in the sacred volume. It sometimes means to separate from the guilt of sin; *i. e.* to justify, or to do that which lays an adequate basis of justification,—as in the following words of Paul. Heb. x. 10: “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” At other times it intends to separate from the pollution of sin; *i. e.* to sanctify, in the ordinary acceptation of the term,—as in the letter of the same apostle to the Thessalonian believers. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Thess. v. 23.) It is with the latter sense of the term “sanctification” that we are concerned at present. Our inquiries will regard, *first*, its nature; *secondly*, its cause, both instrumental and ultimate; and *thirdly*, its importance and necessity.

§ 2. FIRST.—ITS NATURE. In regard to this a very few words will suffice. It is not radically different from regeneration, in the sense I attach to that term: it is merely the carrying on to a state of completion the work which is then commenced—the progressive illumination of the understanding; its increasing deliverance from prejudice, and mistake, and error, resulting from that love of sin which sits enthroned in every human bosom. All who have experienced that important change are represented as brought “out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel.” And it is marvellous light, compared with the deep and impervious gloom of their former condition. Yet the light, though surprising when set in contrast with their former ignorance, is far from being perfect. It both needs and admits of increase. And sanctification partially consists in giving to it additional clearness and brilliancy. Divine truth is opened more fully to the mind. The individual in whom the process of sanctification is carried on becomes better acquainted with his own state and character—with his entire and necessary dependance upon God—with the extent of his guilt and depravity—with the relations he sustains to other beings, and the obligations which grow out of them. He grows in his acquaintance with God—the glory of his perfections, and the nature of his government; with the law of God—its extent and spirituality. He perceives more distinctly and impressively the obstacles which opposed the communication of mercy to sinners, and the nature

and perfection of that sacrifice which removed them. And the result of this is, that all the affections of his mind are brought more habitually and entirely under the influence of Divine truth. They are less frequently improperly developed. They are more uniformly excited by those objects which ought to awaken them. Unholy objects more certainly and constantly arouse dislike and fear. Holy objects, on the contrary, more uniformly excite desire, and hope, and complacence, and love, and delight. And not only is there a more habitual excitement of holy affections, but the affections grow in point of strength. Love becomes more ardent; desire more intense; joy more extatic; hope more triumphant. Thus the gospel rules in the heart with a more resistless sway; and all the powers of the new creature being more entirely consecrated to God, he more eminently promotes his glory in all that he does, says, and enjoys.

§ 3. There are two or three remarks on this part of the subject to which I would direct your attention.

First.—That the process of sanctification extends its influence to all the powers of the mind. “I pray God,” said the apostle, “your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” It does not enlighten the understanding, and leave the affections carnal and perverse, or cold. Nor does it, on the other hand, warm and purify the affections, while the former clouds of intellectual and moral darkness continue to hang over the mind. Were it possible for either of these suppositions to be embodied in actual character, that character would be a *lusus naturæ* in the spiritual world. This however is not the case. “Sanctification,” says Dwight, “affects the whole man;

his views, affections, purposes, and conduct,—and those of every kind. It extends alike to his duties of every kind; towards himself, his fellow-creatures, and his Maker. It affects and improves, indiscriminately, all the virtues of the Christian character; love to God, and to mankind; faith, repentance, justice, truth, kindness, humility, forgiveness, charity, generosity, public spirit, meekness, patience, fortitude, temperance, moderation, candour, and charitableness of judgment. It influences ruling passions and appetites; habits of thought and affection, of language and practice. It prompts to all the acts of piety; to prayer, praise, attendance upon the sanctuary, and its ordinances, our sanctification of the Sabbath, Christian communion, and Christian discipline."

We must not understand, however, that the process of sanctification influences invariably all the powers of the mind equally. There are cases in which the understanding makes a more rapid progress than the heart; and others again where the heart is distinguished by holy and devotional feeling, where a corresponding eminence in knowledge—at least knowledge of the theory of Christianity—does not exist. Some individuals have more of Christian boldness, and others more of Christian meekness and humility. This is, however, to be lamented. It is eminently desirable that there should be perfect symmetry of character; that the head and the members should correspond in magnitude; that light and love should exist in the same degree; and thus that the man of God should be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

Secondly.—That when it is affirmed that sanctification is a progressive work, we must be understood as stating what it ought in all cases to be, and what in general it

is, than what it is invariably. It is more easy to prove that a Christian *should* advance in sanctification, than that he actually *does* so. "Ye did run well," said the apostle, to some to whom he wrote; "who hath hindered you that you should not obey the truth?" "I have somewhat against thee," said the Spirit to the church at Ephesus, "because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." (Rev. ii. 4, 5.) Yet as they are represented as going from strength to strength, we must suppose that upon the whole Christians make progress in sanctification; and that an individual who is manifestly retrograding has reason to fear that he has been satisfying himself with a name to live, while he is dead.

Thirdly.—That we have no reason to suppose that the process of sanctification is completed till the time of deliverance from this body of sin and death. The perfection which is ascribed to the people of God in the sacred volume is comparative, not absolute perfection; it is maturity of Christian knowledge and experience and feeling. The notion of those who imagine that it is possible to attain, in the present state, to sinless perfection, and actually to continue for an indefinite period of time without a single improper thought or irregular desire, is contradicted by the experience of the great body of the Lord's people, and by the Scripture doctrine of indwelling sin, from which nothing but death can set us free. At the same time, it is necessary to guard against mistakes here. For the impossibility which has now been affirmed is only a moral infirmity. We must take care not to represent the Divine law as raised so utterly above our reach as to set us free from obligation to perfect obedience. I am not sure that Calvinists

keep clear of this error; and certain I am that we have need to guard against a tendency to relax in our efforts to avoid sin,—a tendency which is apt to be produced by the reflection that we cannot hope to be perfectly delivered here from its contamination. The apostle prayed that the Thessalonians might be sanctified wholly. We are commanded to be perfect; and with nothing short of absolute perfection ought we to be satisfied. We must never fix our desires upon a point below this. Our attainments, in conformity to the Divine image, must necessarily be inconsiderable and paltry if we do. It is true here, as well as in relation to other things, that the way to accomplish great things is to aim at great things—to attempt great things. Those are nominal Christians who endeavour to extenuate their failings and imperfections by alleging that perfect obedience is impossible. And we need to be cautioned against resting satisfied with present attainments, under the notion that perfection is out of the question. How different the spirit and language of Paul! Phil. iii. 7-15: “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which

also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

§ 4. SECONDLY.—THE CAUSE, BOTH INSTRUMENTAL AND ULTIMATE. The instrumental cause is, doubtless, the word or the truth of God. "Sanctify them," said our Lord, "through thy truth: thy word is truth." It may be conceded, and indeed must be conceded, that the word "sanctify" here does not mean to purify in a moral sense, but to consecrate, or set apart, or more completely qualify the disciples for the great work to which the Saviour had called them; yet, as they were thus set apart by the moral influence of the truth upon their minds, the words are a prayer for sanctification, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. To sanctify in this sense is, as we have seen, to remove the darkness which remains in the understanding, together with the prejudice and depravity which continue to defile the mind and conduct after conversion to God. In effecting this important work, the truth is then the exclusive means or instrument. In illustration of this assertion, I observe—

First,—that it is eminently adapted to promote our sanctification. It possesses, indeed, all the moral fitness to illuminate and sanctify that can be imparted to it. It gives a perfect exhibition of our character and state —of the Divine perfections—of the person and work of Christ; it unfolds the evil nature and dreadful conse-

quences of sin—the vanity of the world, and its utter incapacity to afford substantial enjoyment; it exhibits the things of the Spirit of God, in all their glowing and unrivalled and infinite beauty. It is therefore fitted, in itself, to enlighten and purify—to transform the soul into the image of God—to sever the affections from everything vile and ignoble and worthless, and to place them upon objects which are capable of affording permanent and ineffable and supreme delight.

It should be remembered on this part of the subject, as I have elsewhere observed, that every part of Divine truth is adapted to sanctify his people. The whole of Divine revelation is armed with a greater or less degree of moral power to effect the purpose for which the Saviour assumed the mediatorial office, and bled and died on Calvary. Its doctrines and its precepts, its promises and its threatenings, all operate morally in the same direction, and tend to bring about this important result; for holiness is inscribed upon them all. The precepts of the inspired volume describe the nature and extent of our duty to God, and prove, beyond controversy, that we are sinners against him. The doctrines of Scripture are adapted to fasten upon our minds a conviction of guilt; and, by exhibiting the way of salvation from the woful curse of a violated law, to lead to repentance, and faith, and love, and obedience, as well as to eternal salvation. The promises of Scripture are, generally speaking, made to such as have been transformed into the image of God; and the threatenings of Scripture are all denounced against the workers of iniquity. Thus the whole of Divine revelation is adapted to promote the sanctification of the people of God, by contributing, in all its parts, to show the necessity of “holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.”

That portion of Divine revelation, however, which is emphatically, and by way of distinction, called the truth—*i. e.* the gospel, or God's testimony concerning the person and work of his only begotten Son—is pre-eminently calculated to carry on this important work in the souls of his people. In the cross of Christ, there was exhibited an unparalleled display of the evil of sin, as well as a bright and harmonious manifestation of all the Divine perfections. “Mercy and truth” then “met together, righteousness and peace embraced each other.” And as it was the testimony or truth of God—the exclusive source of our knowledge of this wonderful and glorious event—which, when spiritually understood and believed, wrought in us the commencement of that change “without which no man can see the Lord;” so it is this truth which constitutes the main instrument by which the Spirit of God carries on the great work of spiritual renovation, until he has made us completely meet for “the inheritance of the saints in light.” Yet though eminently adapted in itself to promote our sanctification, it cannot effect this important object unless it is understood and believed. It is through the medium of faith that any truth or doctrine whatever comes to exert its native influence upon the mind. A sorrowful account will not awaken grief, nor will a pleasing one excite joy, unless it is believed. In like manner, the truth of the gospel must be brought into contact with the mind, and preserved in contact with it by faith, or it will not sanctify. Hence, though the gospel is called the power of God to salvation, it is only so to them that believe; though it worketh effectually, it is only in them that believe; though it bringeth forth fruit, even “the peaceable fruit of righteousness,” it is only in those who know of its grace, and have experienced its truth.

Upon others it exerts no power—it produces no fruit.
I observe accordingly—

Secondly,—that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate cause of sanctification; because it is his continued agency that preserves his people in the knowledge and belief of Divine truth,—and thus secures to them that holy influence which it exerts, whenever it is regarded as true. It is here that Divine influence is necessary; and this is the object for which it is exerted. It is not necessary, as it has been observed formerly, to secure the native influence of the truth upon the mind, when it is understood and believed; but it is necessary to preserve us from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience—to keep the eyes of the understanding open, and to open them yet more fully. Hence faith is said to be the gift of God. (Ephes. ii. 8.) And God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, is said to shine in the hearts of men, “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. iv. 6.) Hence also the people of God are said to be kept “by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter i. 5.) And the psalmist prayed, saying, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” (Psalm cix. 18.) Thus faith is necessary to secure the native influence of the truth upon the mind; and Divine influence is necessary to the existence, the support, and the increase of faith. The Spirit does not sanctify without the word; nor the word without the Spirit. The influence of both is necessary, in the first stage of Christian experience, and in every subsequent step of our progress, till we are made “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

§ 5. The whole of the preceding statements are adapted to preserve us—

(*First*),—from presumption. From the presumption of expecting that the work of sanctification will be carried on within us, by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, though we should not be diligent in the use of those means which are adapted to promote it. It is not by direct influence that the Holy Spirit sanctifies, in the sense in which we have explained the term. By the instrumentality of the truth, the mind is progressively enlightened, purified, and comforted. We are filled with joy and peace in believing. It becomes us then to study the word of God with great attention and diligence, and conscientiously to employ all those means which are adapted to place it before the view of the mind, and to bring the powerful influence of its doctrines and precepts, and promises and threatenings, to bear upon it; for it is in exact proportion to the degree in which our minds are conversant with it, and contemplate its excellence and glory, that we derive benefit from it. And—

(*Secondly*),—from a spirit of self-confidence and dependence. The means of grace, and even the truth itself, must be regarded as the instruments of sanctification merely: the agent is God. After our Lord had exhorted his disciples to work out their own salvation, by studying the Sacred Scriptures, he prayed that God would sanctify them through their influence. And in this respect he was an ensample to us, that we should follow his steps; for, properly speaking, it is not the means which sanctify us, but God, in, or by, or through the means. He is the agent; they are only the instruments through which his power is exerted. Without his efficacious operation, the reading of the Scriptures—

all the means of grace—will be attended to in vain; not, as I have said before, because they are inadequate and unsuitable, but on account of the moral infirmity and pollution of our minds. It is then of great importance to attend to all the means which God has appointed for our sanctification, in the spirit of devotion. Never let us forget to pray that *God* would sanctify us by the truth, since nothing short of his blessing will ensure our growing in knowledge and holiness. And when the Scriptures are read in this spirit, the progress that is made in a short period is oftentimes wonderful. The merely *critical* student, after toiling months, and even years, will be surpassed in a single half-hour by the *devotional* student. In an acquaintance with words, and symbols indeed,—with the shell, so to speak, in which the substance of Divine revelation is contained,—the former may still maintain the precedence; but in a knowledge of the substance itself—of the spirit, or moral meaning of the truth—of that hidden glory (hidden from the eyes of the natural man) which gives it its moral power over the human heart, the latter is enabled to leave his competitor far behind. He earnestly implored the promised teaching of the Spirit of all grace; and “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gave unto him the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.” He filled him with “the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that so he might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;” consecrating all the powers of his mind, and all the members of his body, to his service and glory. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," is language embodying the same ideas and principles.

In describing the agency of the Spirit in sanctification, Dwight gives the following statement. "The manner in which this work is performed in the mind of man must, like other questions concerning the agency of intelligent beings, remain in a great measure concealed from such minds as ours. My observations concerning it will therefore be very few. In my own view, the work of sanctification, as far as the agent is concerned, is no other than a repetition of the same agency by which we are regenerated. Our regeneration, according to my own apprehensions, is accomplished, as I mentioned at large in a former discourse, by the communication to our minds of a new relish for Divine things. Our sanctification, as distinguished from it, consists supremely in enhancing this relish,—in rendering it more intense, more uniform, more vigorous, and universally more operative. The communication of this relish or disposition makes us holy at first, or in our regeneration. Subsequent communications of the same nature render us more and more holy afterwards. As the effect in both cases is the same, it cannot be reasonably doubted that the cause is the same; nor that it operates in the same manner. If this disposition is in the mind —the source of holy volitions and virtuous conduct, the stronger, the more prevalent it is at any succeeding period, the more virtuous will be the life."*

I have the same objection against the phraseology here as before; though I think he states what is substantially true. Whatever be the nature of that effect which is produced upon the mind in regeneration, it is doubtless sustained, and increased and deepened, as well

* Vol. i., pp. 637, 638.

as rendered permanent. But I confess, it is marvellous to me that, after having restricted the term “sanctification” to the enhancing of that relish for Divine things which is communicated in regeneration, he should immediately proceed to represent the word and providence of God as the instruments of sanctification. A relish for Divine things, in his sense of the term, can no more be supported by instrumentality than produced by it.

§ 6. THIRDLY.—THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF SANCTIFICATION will appear—

First,—from the consideration that our Lord assumed the mediatorial office to secure it. He submitted to be born of a woman, and to lie in a manger—to encounter the perverseness and ingratitude of his friends, together with all the indignities and sufferings which could be inflicted upon him by his enemies; he condescended to be a man of sorrows, and to sustain a burden of grief and misery, of the weight of which we can form but a very inadequate conception; and, finally, to hang as a common malefactor upon the cross, that he might “redeem his people” from all iniquity—“might sanctify and cleanse the church, and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” In short, the whole plan of mercy—of which the last intercessory prayer of the Saviour, and all the petitions it contains, constitute a part,—that stupendous plan, which will call forth the admiration of countless millions of pure and happy and exalted intelligences throughout eternal ages,—that wondrous scheme, which could only have been devised by infinite wisdom, and executed by boundless goodness and omnipotent power, had for its object—or, at least, for one of its objects—the purification of those “vessels of mercy” whom Jehovah had appointed to salvation. Is it then possible to

suppose, that so surprising a scene as the incarnation, and sufferings, and death of the Son of God, would have been exhibited to the world, if the object for which he clothed himself in flesh, and died on Calvary, had not been great beyond human calculation and conception? Unless it be admitted that Jehovah, in this the chief of all his works, has acted in a manner unworthy of himself, it cannot be denied that the sanctification of his people must bear in importance some proportion to the magnificence of the means used to secure it.

Secondly.—The importance of this blessing is evinced by the consideration, that it is necessary to render us extensively useful in the world. This was the case, as we have already seen, with reference to the apostles. They were appointed to preach the gospel, as the accredited agents of the Lord Jesus, to the world at large; and the proper and successful discharge of this commission required qualifications both of an intellectual and moral kind. It required an accurate and comprehensive acquaintance with the whole plan of mercy; since it was clearly necessary for them to understand Divine truth, before they could teach it to others. But, in addition to this, it required eminent devotedness of heart to God,—a measure of zeal for the Divine glory, and the salvation of men, too glowing and ardent to be repressed, in its efforts to extend the knowledge of the Saviour, by any dangers, however great, or even by death itself, in its most terrific and appalling shapes. At the time when the petition of the passage—“*sanctify them through thy truth*”—was uttered, the disciples were, to a certain extent, possessed of these qualifications; but our Lord prayed that they might enjoy them in a yet more abundant measure,—that their views of the character, and person, and work of Christ, being rescued from all

remaining obscurity—their hearts coming under the full power of Divine truth—and the spark of Divine love, which then existed in their bosoms, being kindled into a blaze, they might be impelled forwards in their labours of Christian benevolence, with increasing and irrepressible ardour.

There is no doubt that the apostles were qualified, in a miraculous manner, for the work in which they were employed; but the qualifications thus communicated were chiefly of an intellectual kind. In addition to these, they needed such moral qualifications as have just been referred to; and it does not appear that these were imparted—unless the case of Paul be considered an exception—by supernatural means. The personal sanctification of the apostles was effected in the same manner with that of the people of God in general; and since high attainments in personal holiness would more eminently fit them for the labours and toils to which they were about to be called, our Lord prayed for them in the words—“Sanctify them through thy truth.”

And eminent personal religion is as necessary, in this point of view, in the present day, as it was in the times of the apostles. It will be generally found that the most *holy* man is the most *useful* man—that the individual who has made the greatest progress in knowledge, and faith, and conformity to the image of God, all other circumstances being equal, will labour most effectively in promoting the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom. At all events, it is perfectly certain that eminent personal piety cannot but prove, as indeed it always does, a powerful auxiliary to any person in his efforts to reclaim his fellow-creatures from the paths of darkness, folly, and vice. Is it then our desire to prove signal blessings in the various stations in which Divine provi-

dence has placed us? We learn from the language and conduct of our blessed Lord that we must desire increasing sanctification. Growing holiness precedes, and is essential to growing usefulness; which depends, perhaps in all cases, more particularly upon the qualities of the heart than those of the head. A clear and perspicacious judgment—a bright and piercing intellect—an understanding capable of embracing almost every subject, in its wide and capacious grasp, is a blessing of no ordinary magnitude; but a heart purified from irregular, and debasing, and unholy desires—a heart expanded by Divine truth, and glowing with the love of God—a heart in which the altar of self-devotion has been overthrown, and the fire of holy consecration to God kindled by the Spirit of Jehovah, is a blessing whose magnitude is still immensely superior. The light of intellect is far less valuable, and truly beautiful, than the light of moral purity; and it is only when the fires of the former are directed and governed by the latter, that they bring either good to man or glory to God.

Finally.—The importance of this blessing appears from the consideration, that it is necessary to our ultimate reception into those mansions which Christ is gone to prepare for his people. For those mansions are holy mansions. Heaven is the peculiar abode of the Deity, for he dwelleth in the *high* place; and therefore it must be a *holy* place. Hence “the New Jerusalem,” which John saw coming down from God, is described as a “*holy city.*” And being a *holy city*, none but those who are perfectly *holy* can obtain admission into it. “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” None but *holy persons* are qualified for the *society* of heaven, for all the inhabitants of that *holy city* are

entirely sanctified; and perfect purity is necessary to the *duties* and *enjoyments* of heaven, for holiness is inscribed upon them all. How important then the prayer, “Sanctify them through thy truth!” There can be no doubt that, when this petition was presented to God on behalf of the disciples, the work of sanctification had commenced in their hearts; for Jesus expressly assures us that they had received his words, and were not of the world, even as he was not of the world. But it is not less manifest, that they were the subjects of much remaining darkness, and prejudice, and depravity; and that, while they remained in that state, they were not fully meet to be taken to the kingdom of God above. And the moral state of the disciples at this period was similar to that of the people of God in general, when first brought out of darkness into marvellous light. Jehovah does not, usually at least, by the first operation of his grace upon their hearts, perfect their preparation for heaven. He introduces them into his family indeed,—he admits them into his school; but to take them immediately to the mansions above would be, in ordinary cases, like placing children in a greatly advanced class, who have merely become initiated into the elements of knowledge. Doubtless, the great Head of the church has many reasons for not taking his people out of the world immediately after their conversion. Some are of a *public* nature. They are the instruments by which he carries on his work in the world; and they must not leave it till their appointed service is fulfilled. There are other reasons, however, of a *private* and *personal* nature. They are destined to remain in the world till their sanctification, by the word and Spirit of the living God, is perfected—till they have grown to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus—till tribulation has

worked patience,—and patience, experience,—and experience, hope,—till the comparative darkness which had clouded their understanding, and the remaining depravity which had polluted their affections, are entirely removed; so that they will be perfectly meet to enter upon the holy duties and enjoyments of the world of spirits. It is to be feared, that there is a proneness among some Christians to convert death into a kind of purgatory—to represent believers as departing out of the world with a very considerable portion of moral pollution cleaving to their spirits, and as getting rid of it in some mysterious manner during their passage through the tomb! All however from which we can be set free in the grave is this body of ours; the appetites and passions of which are so frequently the cause of sin. In so far as depravity cleaves to, and infects the mind, or the spiritual part of our nature—that part which will survive while the body is mouldering into dust, it must be removed before the spirit is disengaged from the earthly house of its tabernacle, or it could not enter into the holy mansions above.* And the complete purification of the people of God is effected in a gradual and progressive manner. The light waxes brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. The holy flame, kindled in the soul by the Spirit of the living God, gradually burns up every unhallowed lust, every unsanctified desire, till the whole is consumed. The Christian warrior, by power imparted from on high, obtains one conquest after another over the rebellious principles and passions of his nature, until he has achieved a victory over them

* The Author does not wish to be understood as advocating the Arminian doctrine of sinless perfection. All he means is, that the purification of the spirit must be complete when the soul leaves the body,—it may be at the moment of separation.

all. The soul which had been once entangled by the present evil world is gradually rescued from its thraldom; till, at length, the last cord is broken, and a sound, more delightful than the music of the spheres, bursts upon the enraptured ear:—

“Prisoner, long detained below,—
Prisoner, now with freedom blest!
Welcome from a world of woe,
Welcome to a land of rest!

“Thus the choir of angels sing,
As they bear the soul on high;
While with hallelujahs ring
All the regions of the sky.”

Thus complete sanctification is necessary to prepare us fully for the glories of the heavenly world. Till the work of sanctification commences, no human being can experience any solid and satisfying enjoyment. Till the work of sanctification is completed, though there may be real, there cannot be perfect enjoyment. Holiness and happiness are inseparably connected with each other. They invariably exist in exact proportion to each other. When the stream of the one is shallow, it is impossible that the other can be deep; and, on the other hand, when the one is deep, it is impossible that the other can be shallow. In heaven we shall be perfectly happy, because we shall then be perfectly holy, *i. e.* perfectly conformed to the holy image of God: for we are to *awake up with his likeness*; and “when [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

LECTURE IV.

PERSEVERANCE.

The subject to be discussed stated:—the apostacy of nominal Christians admitted:—that real Christians may fall into sin conceded:—the perseverance of the *saints*, and not false-hearted professors, is the doctrine contended for:—the power and will of God, the only ground on which the doctrine rests:—*first* proof of, derived from the doctrine of election:—*second* proof, derived from the peculiarity of *intention* in our Lord's sacrifice, when he laid down his life for the sheep:—*third* proof, express promises:—Dr. Whitby's views and statements examined:—the language of our Lord to his disconsolate disciples:—the apostles' statements:—*fourth* proof, passages that imply it:—the objection, that this is inconsistent with the admonitions of Scripture, answered:—the objection derived from cases of supposed final apostacy considered.

§ 1. FEW theological questions have been contested with greater keenness than that which relates to the perseverance of the saints. It has been opposed by argument, by misrepresentation, and by attaching consequences to it from which the minds of all good men must necessarily revolt. Many of the ordinary objections will be shown to be invalid, by a mere statement of the doctrine itself. Before therefore I bring forwards any argument in support of it, I shall state in a few words what it is that we really undertake to defend, viz.

that all who have been REALLY converted to God will be kept by his mighty power through faith unto final salvation.

§ 2. This statement of the doctrine tacitly admits, it will be observed, that *professed* Christians may fall, and that finally. Judas, one of the twelve, denied his Lord; destroyed himself, when reproached for his perfidy and pre-eminent guilt by his own conscience; and went, we are told, “to his own place.” Indeed, I do not know any who have been absurd enough to maintain that all professors, however great their knowledge, and however lively their zeal, will be preserved from final apostacy. What then is more natural than to suppose, when an individual apostatizes from the faith, that he was a Christian in appearance, and not in heart? that he had a name to live, while he was dead? We admit, indeed, that there are cases which seem to present a formidable difficulty—cases of individuals drawing back who seemed to possess, not only the knowledge, but the devotional feeling which characterize real Christians. It is not necessary to admit, however, that they were such. They may have been hypocrites. There have been instances in which persons, who have drawn back from their former associates and profession, have admitted that they had been acting a part, and have boasted of their skill in deceiving the body with whom they had been connected. And doubtless there are many cases of a similar kind, where the hypocrisy is not acknowledged. Circumstances will sometimes occur in which a worldly-minded man will find it useful to him to assume the garb of religion. He accordingly puts it on, till he has accomplished his end; and then he throws it off in the best way he can. Or they may be self-deceived. I am far from supposing that all apostates from the truth were, previously to their drawing back,

conscious hypocrites. The parable of the sower is a most instructive one in this point of view. The seed which fell upon the stony ground speedily sprung up; and our Lord assures us that this represents the case of a man who “heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it.” This man is to be carefully distinguished from the hypocrite, and a real believer. He has not root in himself: he is not therefore a Christian; and is indeed denied to be such by our Lord. But neither is he a hypocrite. He partially understands the truth. His mind is impressed, and his affections are excited by the conceptions he has of it; though they may be, and indeed are radically mistaken. He fancies himself a believer, and is considered such by others, till the time of trial comes; and then the real state of the case becomes manifest. The true solution of all such instances is supplied by those words of the apostle John,—“They went out from us, because they were not of us; for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.”

§ 3. Further: the statement of the doctrine does not imply that believers will never be permitted to fall into sin; it merely affirms that they will be so kept as ultimately to obtain salvation. David and Peter fell into sin—grievous sin; the former was guilty of murder and adultery, and the latter denied his Lord. Yet there is no reason to doubt, on the one hand, that they attained ultimate salvation; nor, on the other, that they had undergone a change of heart at the period of their melancholy lapse. The language of our Lord to the latter, and of the historian in reference to him, puts the final state of the latter especially beyond the reach of doubt. “Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea,

Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." Having thrice repeated the question, he added, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." "This spake he," adds the historian, "signifying by what death he should glorify God." (John xxi. 15-19.) And why should we hesitate to believe that both David and Peter, at the time of their fall, were holy or regenerated men? There is so much depravity remaining in the heart, after it has been renewed by Divine grace, and there are so many temptations to elicit it, that we need not wonder at its manifestation when restraining grace is not exerted. And there are many purposes, highly interesting and important, which may induce the great Eternal to leave his people for a time to themselves: they obtain thereby an impressive sense of their own weakness, and their dependence upon God becomes more exclusive and complete.

§ 4. Further: the statement of this doctrine does not imply that any are rendered certain of obtaining eternal life, whatever may be their spirit and their conduct. It is absolutely astonishing, how any should have attempted to fasten this absurd consequence upon it. Our doctrine is the perseverance of believers. Perseverance in what? Manifestly in faith to the end of their days. Hence the statement of the doctrine given a short time ago was in the following terms,—"that all who have been *really* converted to God will be kept by his mighty power through faith unto final salvation;" and therefore consequently and necessarily in "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." And yet we are represented

as teaching that certain individuals are, by a decree of God, rendered secure of eternal life, even if they abandon the faith, and plunge into the depths of immorality; *i. e.* a statement which declares that God has determined to preserve his people in the faith is equivalent with one to save them without faith. We plead for the perseverance of the saints—of those, that is, who have root in themselves; and our adversaries have the impudence to tell us that we affirm the certain salvation of false-hearted apostates. The doctrine for which we plead is perseverance in holiness. The point we affirm is, that though the flesh remains in believers, and that though, through the influence of powerful temptation, it may obtain a temporary triumph, it shall not be permitted to regain the habitual ascendancy,—that the new principles which grace has implanted shall remain the governing principles,—that the work of sanctification shall be progressive, till it is perfected in the world above. Now there is surely nothing in this doctrine to afford the slightest countenance to presumptuous and ungodly men. It is manifestly capable, we admit, of being perverted. It is possible, we admit, that an unconverted man, associating the two parts of our doctrine, that a believer may fall, but not fall finally, and taking it for granted that he is a believer,—it is quite possible that such a man, while conscious he is not what he should be, may derive unhallored consolation from the thought that he shall certainly be reclaimed, and so that all will be well with him at last; but then this is an abuse of the doctrine, somewhat like the ancient perversion of the doctrine of justification by faith, of which the apostle speaks in such strong terms of severity. If the doctrine we advocate be perseverance in faith and holiness, the more legitimate conclusion for a man who is not now obeying the gospel

to draw is, not that he shall be saved, but that he is not one of those who are appointed to salvation. I do not say that this conclusion would be, in all cases, a correct one. Had it been drawn by Peter, when denying his Lord, it manifestly would not have been so. Yet nothing can be more manifest than that our doctrine, correctly explained, is not adapted to afford comfort to any one who is not actually persevering. It is perseverance in faith and holiness for which we contend. The decree of God with reference to it is, we imagine, that all who have faith shall be kept from making ultimate shipwreck of it—that all who have been made holy shall be kept so. Now a man who loses the faith and holiness of the gospel—even though it should really be but a temporary loss—is not actually persevering. He is not now kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto final salvation; he can have no ground of confidence that he will be so kept in the days which are to come. In the case supposed, it is sheer and naked presumption to draw consolation from the doctrine of perseverance. Multitudes have heard the word, “and anon with joy received it,”—and have drawn back to perdition. Every individual, in a state of backsliding, has no evidence that this is not the case with him,—he has every reason to fear that it is so: if he be a real Christian, he has now no evidence of it; and he can legitimately and scripturally derive no comfort from the doctrine of perseverance, till the power of Divine grace has brought him again to persevere—has led him back again to the paths of pleasantness and peace.

§ 5. Finally: it is not implied in our statement of the doctrine of perseverance, that the principles of the new nature are in themselves indestructible and immortal. The statement is, that we are kept by the mighty

power of God through faith unto final salvation. I am apprehensive that in cautious assertions to the contrary have been made by too many advocates of the doctrine of perseverance. "Though we grant," says Dr. Gill, "that it is from the promise, yet not purely from the promise of God, that true believers cannot fall away; for though we own that the new creature is imperfect, yet we affirm that such is the nature, strength, and firmness of true grace that it can never perish. Wherefore our arguments taken from the nature of faith, conversion, and the new birth, sufficiently prove the doctrine we plead for."* Hinton tells us, also, that spiritual life is in its own nature immortal. This I do not believe. It is in my apprehension perfect nonsense. Grace has often been called an incorruptible principle. I believe that it is so; but not in its own nature,—it is rendered so by Divine decree. If it were impossible in the nature of the case for faith to sink, there would be no need for our being kept in the faith by the power of God. Having made these remarks, explanatory of the nature of the doctrine, I pass on to adduce the proof of it.

§ 6. FIRST.—Our first proof of the doctrine of final perseverance of the saints is derived from the consideration, that the faith and holiness of the people of God is the partial accomplishment in their experience of the decree of election. They were predestinated to eternal life; and their reception of the gospel, and their transformation into the holy image of God, are necessary steps towards the accomplishment of that ultimate object. Hence they are said to have been chosen in Christ, that they might be holy,—to have been chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,—to be the called according to the purpose of God.

* *Cause of God and Truth*, vol. i., p. 409.

How can it be doubted, then, that they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto final salvation? That is manifestly necessary to secure the accomplishment of the Divine purposes; so that if the council of God must stand, and if he will do all his pleasure, he must by his grace prevent the final fall of his people.

§ 7. SECONDLY.—Our second proof of the doctrine of final perseverance is derived from that peculiarity of intention with which the Lord Jesus Christ presented the sacrifice of himself unto God. He laid down his life for the sheep—with the especial purpose of bringing all the chosen to salvation to eternal life, through that new and living way which he was about to open by the blood of his cross. It is in prosecuting the same intention that he sends the Holy Spirit (for this Divine agent acts under his directions, in consequence of his investiture with the regal dignity,) to enlighten their eyes—to bring them to the faith of the gospel—to make them new creatures. Now since he laid down his life that he might at length bring them to heaven, and since he makes them the subjects of faith in pursuance of the same intention, can we possibly doubt that they will be kept by his mighty power through faith unto final salvation?

§ 8. THIRDLY.—Our third proof of this doctrine is derived from the express promises and declarations of the word of God. In Hannah's song of praise, she saith of Jehovah, "He will keep the feet of his saints." (1 Sam. ii. 9.) Does not this imply that he will not permit them finally to perish? In like manner, Job says, "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." (Job xvii. 9.) Thus also the psalmist testifies,—"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast

down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. The Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever." (Psalm xxxvii. 23, 24, 28.) "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." (Psalm ciii. 17.) Thus Isaiah: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isaiah liv. 17.) Thus also Jeremiah: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. For I will forgive their iniquities, and will remember their sins no more." And still more explicitly,—"They shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; xxxii. 38-40.) "Now," says an excellent writer, "can all this consist with the Lord's so leaving these very same persons to themselves, so giving them up to their own hearts' lusts, and so allowing the great enemy of their souls to tempt and overcome them, that in the event they shall completely and finally desert from God, and have their portion with his enemies in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels?"

In entire coincidence with these promises and engagements of the Old Testament is the language of our blessed Saviour in the New. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great

signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt. xxiv. 24.) The language denotes the impossibility of so deceiving the individuals referred to as to occasion their final fall and ruin; and this impossibility is grounded on their election. Election cannot then intend here the choice which God had made of them to constitute his visible church, or a part of it; since many members of the visible church were deceived, and fell away. Nothing but God's eternal choice of his people can preserve them from apostacy.

§ 9. Dr. Whitby tells us that by the term "elect" we are to understand persevering Christians; but to suppose that this is its meaning is to represent the apostle as having uttered an identical proposition. Who knows not that a persevering Christian cannot be a non-persevering Christian? Dissatisfied, as it should seem, with this mode of evading the argument, he tells us afterwards that the phrase, "if it were possible," denotes only a great difficulty in the performance of an act possible in itself. I answer, that if it be conceded that it is occasionally so used, it is manifestly not so used here. It is obviously intended to denote absolute impossibility.

In addition to this, we have our Lord's words to the woman of Samaria: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst," or shall not thirst for ever; "but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.) This language is in harmony with what he said on another occasion: "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever,"—an expression which is explained by another, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never

thirst." (John vi. 58, 47, 35.) And yet more strongly,—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.)

Add to these declarations the following. “This is the Father’s will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John vi. 39, 40.) To evade the force of this text, Dr. Whitby tells us that the loss which Christ affirms he cannot sustain is, not that of believers by a defection from the faith, but their perdition by death. To this it may be replied, that if it were admitted, it would not overturn our argument. Our Lord is not speaking of those who endure unto the end. His assertion is not that he shall not lose any by death who die in the faith; but that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, shall be raised to life eternal. They must therefore be kept from the first moment of believing to the end of their days, or the declaration of Christ would not be verified in them.

It may however be denied, that Dr. Whitby has given us a just account of our Lord’s declaration; for it includes more than an assertion that death cannot deprive him of any who believe on him. “This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life.”*

* [“—SHOULD *have everlasting life.*” English Version has—“*may have everlasting life;*” but there can be no doubt but that the author thought the translation he has adopted more faithful to the original—*ἐχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον*—it is therefore retained.]

To secure the accomplishment of this purpose, many things are necessary. They must be preserved from apostacy; they must be raised up again at the last day: but this is only one thing, amongst others, which must be done to prevent the loss of those whom the Father gave to him.

Still more strong perhaps is our Lord's language in John x. 27-30. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

Dr. Whitby maintains that the exhortations to perseverance prove the possibility of their perishing after all. I answer, that this is in direct opposition to the passage. Our Lord says positively and absolutely, "They shall never perish." Whatever these exhortations then may imply—and they will be considered afterwards—it is impossible that they can teach that any of the chosen to salvation can ultimately fall.

It is further argued by Whitby, that the text seems only to speak of such sheep as have already persevered; and so it is not a promise of perseverance, but of the reward of it—eternal felicity, which shall be incapable of interruption. I answer, that the statement is obviously untrue. The passage does not speak of such sheep as have finally persevered (which Whitby's statement supposes, or it is absurd, because every Christian has persevered): it speaks of sheep who are *persevering*—who hear the voice of Christ, and follow him. Of them our Lord says, "They shall never perish." They must therefore be kept by the power of God, or they might

and would perish. I have no objection to grant to Whitby that the words of Christ are a direct promise of the reward of perseverance; but few things can be more self-evident than that it must include a promise of the thing itself.

It is finally argued by Whitby, that our Lord merely promises that his sheep shall never perish through any defect on his part, or by the force of any plucking them by violence out of his hands; not but by the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, they may choose to go from him, though they are not snatched out of his hand. Mr. Wesley has expressed the same sentiment, in very coarse but very emphatic terms,—“They may wriggle themselves out.”

I answer, that this reply manifestly overlooks a part of our Lord’s assertion. It would have considerable weight, if the promise were merely, “Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” But the Saviour says more than this. He says that his sheep shall “never perish,”—a promise which necessarily implies that grace will prevent their *wriggling* themselves out of his hand; for in that case they must perish. It would be comparatively poor consolation to a man, who knows the treachery of his own heart, to be assured that he was to be preserved against the enemy without, but that he must guard himself against the enemy within. He would feel that this was leaving the weakest part of the citadel unprotected. God does not so act towards his people. He guards them against their most formidable enemy—against themselves—against their proneness to depart from him. There is considerable force in the particle *kai*,—“and none shall pluck them out of my hand.” Even Whitby himself tells us that it is illative, —“Neither shall any perish, for none shall pluck them

out of my hand." Now as it has been justly observed, if these sheep may perish, and come short of eternal life,—it matters not by what means,—if they may perish, for instance, by voluntary withdrawal from him,—then the illation, or consequence, is not just; it cannot be affirmed that they shall never perish, for or because none shall pluck them out of his hand.

§ 10. We may add to what has been said the words of our Lord, when encouraging his disconsolate disciples,—“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.” (John xiv. 16–19.) Though I have not advanced to the testimony given to this doctrine by the apostles, I must not refrain from directing you to compare with these words of our Lord the argument and language of Paul,—“If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” (Rom. v. 10.) “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (chap. viii. 34). “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 4.)

§ 11. The general statements of the apostles is also in entire harmony with the language of our Lord, and of the prophets. “Being confident,” says Paul to the Philippians, “that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ” (chap. i. 6).

Again: "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. i. 8, 9.) Compare with this 1 Cor. x. 13; 1 Thess. v. 23, 24; 2 Thess. iii. 3. "The argument from these passages of Scripture," says one in favour of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, "stands thus. If God's fidelity be engaged to confirm them unblameable unto the end, whom he hath called to the communion of his Son; if his faithfulness will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will make a way to escape; if St. Paul had ground of confidence that he who had begun the good work in the Philippians would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; if it be part of God's fidelity to sanctify them wholly, and to preserve their whole spirit, soul, and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath called; then must they persevere to the end."

The most plausible mode by which the Arminians attempt to evade the testimony of these passages is the one suggested by Grotius. "God will do," says he, *quod suarum est partium*, "all that is requisite on his part to render you unblameable unto the end; so that you shall not fail of being so through any want of Divine grace requisite to that end, or any unfaithfulness on his part to his promise." I answer, that the confirmation of which the apostle speaks is not merely of the kind to which Grotius refers, *i. e.* not merely the confirmation which he affords as a moral governor, by imparting the means of perseverance—such inducements as are adapted in themselves to secure it; but the confirmation which he effects by sovereign grace,—since this confirmation

alone can secure the end at which he aims. And it cannot be supposed for a moment that He will employ incompetent means, of whom Paul says, "Who shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Another decided proof of this doctrine is contained in 1 Peter i. 5: "Who are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The connection of this passage has always struck me as remarkable. The "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away," is represented in the previous verse as "reserved in heaven"—lodged, so to speak, in a place of safety. It is therefore out of danger; but are they? Two things may prevent the enjoyment of an inheritance. The inheritance itself may be destroyed; or the heir may perish ere he takes possession of it. Neither of these, according to the statements of Peter, can happen. The inheritance is reserved in heaven for the elect. They are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation, till the destined moment arrives for their entering upon its enjoyment.

To this passage Dr. Whitby objects, that it only proves that all who are preserved to salvation are so kept by the power of God, but not that all believers are so kept; *i.e.* it points out the agency by which those who are preserved are kept, but does not promise that any shall be preserved. I answer, that the apostle, writing to the body of professed Christians scattered throughout the regions enumerated by him, and exercising a charitable judgment that they were what they appeared and professed to be, declares that God had begotten them to the hope of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,"—an

inheritance reserved in heaven for them, and for the enjoyment of which they were kept by the power of God. I admit that there is a change in the pronoun used by the apostle at the close of the fourth verse, which might appear at first sight to throw some probability upon the assertion of Whitby, that in the fifth verse he does not refer to the body of believers, but merely to those among them who should persevere. It must be observed, however, that this change from the first person to the second is continued in the following verses, where it cannot be doubted that it includes the whole body of professed Christians addressed in the first verse; so that the apostle as much says of the whole body that they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," as that they are begotten again to "a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Besides, it is worth observing, perhaps, that some manuscripts read *ημας* instead of *ιμας*; and that the former is actually retained by M'Knight. I do not dwell upon this, however, because I believe the correct reading to be *ιμας*.

Whitby further objects, that the passage proves only that they are kept through faith, *i. e.* if they continue in the faith, and hold the beginning of their confidence stedfast unto the end. It has been well stated in reply, that there is no *if* in the text,—that faith is not represented as a condition, but as a means of preservation engaged by the power of God; for that is as much secured by the power of God as salvation itself, or preservation to it. "Besides," adds the same writer, "such a sense of the words is no other than this, that these persons are kept by the power of God, if or as long as they keep themselves." He might have added, that it is sheer nonsense; for if Whitby allows that God keeps them

in the faith, he admits all for which we plead: if, on the other hand, he denies that God keeps them in the faith, and maintains that they keep themselves,—then what need is there for God to keep, or how indeed can God keep them? It ought to be a sufficient refutation of the objection of Whitby merely to read the passage as he understands it: “Who are kept by the mighty power of God to salvation, if ye persevere in the faith.”

Another proof of the doctrine of perseverance may be derived from Rom. viii. 38, 39: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Dr. Whitby objects here, that the apostle does not say that nothing can separate true believers from the love of God, or Christ, but only declares his persuasion that nothing would do it. I answer, that the objection contradicts the apostle’s declaration. He does not say that none of these things *will*, in point of fact, separate the people of God from his love, but that none of them *can* do it. They shall not “be able,” he says, to do it.

He further objects, with more plausibility, that the words respect not the love with which we love God, but his affection towards us; and that the apostle only intimates that such persons, continuing in the love of God, shall be preserved by him from the temptations here mentioned, and so supported by his grace and Spirit as to be able to bear them.

In reply, it must in fairness be admitted, I think, that the direct object of the apostle is to show that nothing can destroy the love of God to us; and not ours to him. Had the latter been expressly affirmed,

our opponent himself must have acknowledged that the perseverance of the saints is a scriptural doctrine. Now I maintain that the continuance of our love to God is necessarily implied in the words we are considering; because nothing can remove the love of God from us, without destroying first our love to him. He is of one mind, and none can turn him. Change is not in Him, but in the creature. Whom he once loves, he must continue to love,—unless they cease, by a radical change of character, to be proper objects of his regard,—or he would be mutable. Hence we are exhorted to keep ourselves in the love of God, *i. e.* by persevering in the path of faith and obedience, since nothing can deprive us of his love but apostacy. This is so manifest that even M'Knight—by no means a decided Calvinist—paraphrases the passage we are now considering in the following manner. “For I am persuaded that neither the fears of death, nor the allurements of life, nor all the different orders of evil angels, against whom we fight, nor things present, nor things to come, whether good or evil, nor prosperity, nor adversity, nor anything else made by God, will be able to make us, the elect, through apostacy, forfeit the love of God, which is bestowed on us through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

§ 12. FOURTHLY.—Our next proof of the doctrine of final perseverance of the saints is derived from certain passages of Scripture which clearly and necessarily imply that doctrine, though they do not expressly affirm it.

Of this class are the following passages. “In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” “And grieve not the Holy

Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." "Now he who establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (Ephes. i. 13, 14; iv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.) In these passages believers are said to be sealed by the Holy Spirit, *i. e.* the characteristic and distinguishing marks of the people of God are impressed upon them by his agency. And they are further said to have the Holy Spirit given to them, as an earnest of the mercy which is in store for them hereafter. Now an earnest is a small part of the price of a thing, given as an evidence that the bargain is completed, and as a pledge that the whole price will be paid at the time agreed upon. But how can the bestowment of the Spirit upon believers be thus a pledge of future glory, unless they are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation?

Whitby makes some weak attempts to overthrow the argument built upon these passages, founded on the fact that the very individuals who are represented as thus sealed unto the day of redemption, by the Holy Spirit, are cautioned against apostacy. The validity of this argument will be examined presently: I now pass it. The only objection worthy of notice is, that by the sealing of the Spirit, we are to understand the supernatural gifts of the Spirit,—that these, attesting the truth of the Christian revelation, might be regarded as a pledge that the promises of future blessings, which it makes to those who persevere to the end, will be accomplished. The gifts were an earnest—but not to the persons who enjoyed them—of coming glory. The phraseology in the first of the passages, "In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of

promise," might seem to throw some probability upon this explanation. It is by no means certain, however, even here, that we are to confine the sealing to supernatural communications; and in the parallel passage in the Corinthians, it is in the highest degree improbable that it should be so confined. The apostle addressed his Second Epistle to the church at Corinth, "with all the saints which are in all Achaia." In reference to them as a body, he says, "Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Unless then the whole church at Corinth, together with all the saints in Achaia, possessed the supernatural influences of the Spirit—which there is no reason whatever to think—the sealing and the earnest denote those common and saving influences which, wherever they are enjoyed, are a pledge of future glory.

Of the class of passages we are now considering is 1 John iii. 9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God,"—*i. e.* he does not sin habitually; he does not practise sin, as that in which he delights, as he did formerly. The meaning cannot be that he never commits an act of sin, and cannot do it; for the same writer himself tells us, that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." But no converted man can live in sin, because the seed of the word of God remaineth in him, which is incorruptible; and that will render him habitually fruitful.

OBJECTIONS.

§ 13. There are two only to which I mean to direct your attention. The first may be thus stated,—The notion that the final fall of the people of God is impos-

sible is inconsistent with the admonitions and warnings against apostacy which are tendered to them; and with the vivid representations which are made to them of the ruin which must overtake them, should they ultimately depart from the ways of God. I answer—

First,—that if there should be admitted to be a seeming inconsistency here, it ought not to overturn the body of evidence which has been brought forwards in support of the certain perseverance of the saints.

Secondly,—that when it is said to be impossible for the people of God finally to fall from the faith, we mean not to be understood as affirming that the thing is impossible in itself, but that it is rendered so by Divine decree.

Thirdly,—that to secure the accomplishment of this decree, those means must be adopted which are adapted to the intellectual and moral nature of man. I imagine that all the self-inconsistency which Arminians conceive to exist between the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, and the exhortations to which we are now referring, results from their forgetfulness of this important sentiment. If God keeps his people, then watchfulness, prayer, care, and diligence on their part are, thinks the Arminian, unnecessary; or conversely, because they are called to watchfulness, prayer, care, and diligence, therefore God does not keep them. Now all this proceeds on a forgetfulness of the obvious principle, that though God does keep them, he keeps them as intelligent and moral agents should be kept—as they need to be kept—as they can only be kept. He keeps them by means; not by physical power, but by the influence of motives calculated to preserve them from going astray. The exhortations, admonitions, and warnings to believers, which the Pelagian declares to be inconsistent with the

notion that God keeps his people, are the very instruments by which he keeps them. They are essential to their being kept; they secure their preservation. It is impossible to conceive of any rational being stultifying himself more completely than the Arminian does on this point. His argument, in effect, is that God cannot keep his people, if he causes the instruments of preservation to bear upon them; or conversely, that because he actually does cause these instruments to bear upon them, they are not kept, and cannot be so.

§ 14. The second objection is drawn from certain conceived cases of actual and final apostacy; or from statements in which such apostacy is, in the word of God, declared to be possible. In John xvii. 12, we find our Lord expressing himself in the following language. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Here, says the Pelagian, it is expressly affirmed that one of those who had been given to Christ by God actually perished. The answer of the Calvinist sometimes is, that though Judas was given to Christ as an apostle, he was not given to him in the sense in which all the elect are so. This answer, however, is insufficient: for according to the present rendering of the passage, our Lord certainly appears to say that none of them whom the Father had given to him, with the exception of the son of perdition, was lost; and we have no right to conclude from the passage that the other apostles and Judas were given to our Lord in different senses. The true answer is suggested by the words *εἰ μὴ*, which, though rightly rendered by our translators "but," is not exceptive, but adversative; and does not imply that Judas was one of those that

were given to Christ, and that his perdition is an exception to the preservation of the rest. The sense of the text is, “None of those that thou gavest me is lost, but the son of perdition is lost.”

The only other passages to which I can refer now are the well-known declarations of the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, recorded in chap. vi. 4–6, and chap. x. 26–29.

I do not choose to avail myself of the fact, that the apostle does not affirm that such apostacy ever takes place; though care seems to be taken to evince this by the language he employs,—“If they shall fall away,—if we sin wilfully.” Candour, I apprehend, ought to lead us to admit that the case he supposes is a possible one. The first of the passages does not present in my apprehension much difficulty. The gifts of which the apostate is supposed to be possessed are, I imagine, with Dr. Guyse, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, and not any special and saving operation of the Spirit. The latter passage has perhaps more of difficulty; but there is nothing in either to render it manifest that he is not speaking of those who have some knowledge of the gospel, and who are convinced in their judgments and consciences of its truth, while their hearts do not approve of its holy and humbling doctrines. That the apostle is not referring to real Christians is I think clear, from the conclusion of the chapter; where he says, “We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” On both the passages I would wish you to consult Guyse and M’Lean.

Certainly nothing more decided is said in reference to the individuals supposed than in regard to the stony-ground hearers; and yet our Lord’s language concern-

ing them intimates that they did not understand the word. There was an essential defect about them. They had no root in themselves. And it is worthy of notice, that when apostates are spoken of in the New Testament, almost always some information is given unfavourable to their previous character. The foolish virgins had no oil in their lamps. The unfruitful branches of the vine are broken off. “They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” “There must be heresies, that they who are approved may be made manifest.”

LECTURE V.

CONSCIENCE—ITS NATURE AND CLAIMS.*

Its physical nature:—the doctrine, maintained in the lecture, stated:—what is a mental power:—conscience as a mental faculty:—the rise and source of our notions of right and wrong:—to what is the name reason or judgment given:—the tenet, that the notion of right and wrong originates in national laws and customs, infidel:—the design of implanting this faculty in the human constitution:—God's general government, of matter, the brute, and of moral agents:—the connection of conscience with the governments of moral agents:—authority and claims of conscience.

I HAVE to call your attention to the nature and claims of conscience. In doing this, I shall most care-

* [The following lecture was delivered to a Scientific and Literary Society in the city of Exeter. This circumstance will account for its somewhat *popular* as well as practical complexion. It is not, on that ground, less characteristic of the Author's philosophy, but less technical in its exposition of it. The reader may see the views of the Author on this subject stated in a more *controversial*, and perhaps *precise* form, in his *Elements of Mental and Moral Science*, pp. 281–285; but especially in Note U, in the Appendix, pp. 442–447. The two lectures immediately following this—on the arguments for the *Divine Origin of Christianity* derived from MIRACLES and PROPHECY—were delivered to the members of the same Society. While they bring before the reader topics that were often discussed in the college, they afford a *specimen* of those efforts the learned Author frequently put forth to benefit those who were brought into daily contact with loose morals and flippant infidelity.—ED.]

fully abstain from encumbering the subject, as some have done, with a mass of learning serving not to enlighten but perplex the mind. Indeed, it is not my intention to dwell at length upon the opinions even of our most enlightened metaphysicians and moralists. I shall merely refer to them, for the sake of placing in a more luminous point of view the sentiments which I have been led to entertain in reference to this part of our mental constitution.

My first inquiry relates to the physical nature of conscience. All agree that the mind is endowed with a power, to which the term conscience may be applied; but very different answers are returned to the question, "What is conscience?" Discordant opinions prevail in reference to *the part* of our mental constitution to which it belongs,—whether it is to be classed with the order of intellect or of emotion—whether it is a moral judgment or a moral feeling—whether its office is to unfold the path of duty, or to supply a powerful inducement to walk in that path, by the dreadful feeling of remorse which it kindles in the bosom of the man who withdraws his feet from it;—or whether the term conscience may not be taken generally to denote everything in the mental constitution by which man, in contradistinction from the brute, is rendered a moral and an accountable agent.

The doctrine I intend to support in this lecture is, *that conscience is a power or faculty or susceptibility of the mind, distinct from all others, in the sense in which any of the mental faculties can be distinct from the rest, rendering it capable of experiencing powerful emotions of self-approbation or self-condemnation, when, on the retrospect of our actions, they are regarded by us as right or wrong.* This definition, it will be observed,

restricts the operations of conscience to ourselves, and withdraws it altogether from what is usually called the intellectual part of our nature. It virtually denies that it is the office of conscience to pass a judgment upon our own actions, or those of others, as right or wrong: it denies, in fact, that it can give us the knowledge of right and wrong; and states, on the contrary, that its sole office is to reward the virtuous, and to punish the wicked man, and thus to enforce general rectitude by the emotions of approbation, or of self-condemnation, which it permits to arise in his bosom. I must however explain more fully the preceding statement, and endeavour to guard it against misconception.

Let me then call your attention to a few remarks on the representation of conscience as a power or faculty of the mind. All writers on mental science are in the habit of speaking of mental powers or faculties; and yet perhaps there are few phrases which have been less luminously explained, and certainly none to which a less amount of idea is generally attached. I doubt whether I shall be able to succeed better than my predecessors; but I beg to observe, that by a mental power or faculty, I understand nothing more than a certain constitution of mind, which renders it capable of forming a certain notion, or of experiencing a certain feeling, or to express both by one phrase—of existing in a certain state. Place two youthful aspirants after literary eminence in the same school of learning, and there will arise in their bosoms a feeling of honourable emulation to outstrip one another in the race; but no such feeling ever existed in the mind of a brute, or ever can exist in it. The brutal mind is not constituted to experience the feeling; *i. e.*, as I understand the expression, it has not the power or faculty or susceptibility of emulation,

or of desire, in which more general class of feeling the emotion of emulation may be included. The human mind has the faculty. If a flock of sheep, belonging to one owner, should break through the fence which had separated them from the more luxuriant pasturage of a neighbouring farmer, they may run from the dog which had been employed many times before to bring them back from their wanderings, because they have the power of memory; but they feel no self-condemnation, because they have not the power of conscience, *i. e.* their minds are not constituted to experience the feeling. The human mind has received this constitution; and therefore, when we regard our conduct as wrong, conscience, which is not the judge but the executioner, strikes the avenging blow.

Further: I would beg you to observe, that in thus classifying conscience with the order of emotions, and refusing to ascribe to it the knowledge we possess of right and wrong, I am very far indeed from intending to affirm that the mind has no capacity of recognising the difference between them. It is one thing to say that we have no notions of actions as right and wrong; and a very different thing to deny that these notions are to be traced to, or originate in conscience. No man can believe more firmly than I do that we have both *moral judgments* (that is, notions of actions as right or wrong,) and *moral emotions*; but it appears to me to indicate a radical mistake, in reference to the nature of conscience, and the final cause of the implantation of this principle in our nature, to represent the moral judgment as the offspring of conscience. Such a judgment is indeed essential to the exercise of conscience,—for there can be no condemning or approving emotion without an accompanying, or rather a previous conception of our

conduct as right or wrong; but that conception, as I shall presently endeavour to show, originates in another part of our nature—in that part, namely, to which we are indebted for all our conceptions of relations,—for the conception of virtue, or of right and wrong, is the conception of a relation.

In a publication intended to exhibit the elements of MORAL AND MENTAL SCIENCE, and in which this point is briefly alluded to, I find on reference that I have expressed myself in the following manner. “While some have overlooked the susceptibility of moral emotion as a constituent part of the mental constitution, others have denied the existence of moral judgments; at least, they have forgotten that a moral emotion necessarily presupposes an exercise of moral judgment, pronouncing upon the rectitude or criminality of the action which excites the emotion.”* In a subsequent passage, I have stated that a perception or “conception of an action as right or wrong invariably precedes an emotion of approbation or disapprobation.”

In maintaining then, as I am disposed to do, that it is not the office of conscience to form and pronounce the moral judgment, *i.e.* the notion of an action as right or wrong, I shall not be understood to deny that we are rendered capable, by the nature which our Creator has given to us, of forming that judgment. On the contrary, the definition which I have ventured to lay before you manifestly implies, that no opportunity would be given for a development of the principle of conscience, if this were not the case, *i.e.* were we incapable of forming a conception of actions as right or wrong. Conscience has been said to be that constitution of mind which

* ELEMENTS OF MENTAL AND MORAL SCIENCE, *Third Edition, enlarged*, p. 260.

renders it capable of experiencing emotions of self-approbation or disapprobation, when on the retrospect of our actions we regard them as virtuous or vicious.

Let me then next call your attention to the rise and the source of these notions. The views which I entertain on this point may be thus summarily expressed; and perhaps it may be expedient to state them before I prosecute the subject any further. I conceive then that there is a right and a wrong in actions—that rectitude or virtue is the conformity or harmony of our affections and actions with the various relations in which we have been placed; of which conformity the perfect intellect of that great Being who created us, guided in its exercise by his infinitely holy nature, is the only infallible judge. According to this statement, then, virtue itself is a relation,—the relation of agreement between our circumstances and characters; and if this view of the subject be correct, we are directed at once to the part of our mental constitution in which the notion of right and wrong originates. It must have its source in the intellectual part of our nature,—that part by which we are enabled to form notions of relations in general. It cannot arise out of any susceptibility of feeling; for that would only give us a feeling, not a judgment or notion: and it needs nothing more for its existence than the general power of recognising relations,—that general power rendering it as possible for the mind to recognise the relation of agreement between our circumstances and our characters, as between the parts and the whole of anything, or between the picture and the original, to which it bears a striking resemblance.

To this general power of recognising relations, it has been usual to give the name of “reason” or “judgment;” and many have thought, that when it is employed in

deciding upon the rectitude or criminality of an action, it is conscience,—or that conscience is nothing more, as Grove says, than reason or understanding considered in the relation it bears to his actions in their moral nature, and most important consequences. To me this appears, as I have more than once stated, obviously incorrect. What is properly denominated conscience is developed in the moral emotion, and not in the moral judgment. That judgment has its origin in the intellectual part of our nature. It is called a moral judgment merely on account of the subject concerning which it is employed; for the difference which exists between this and an ordinary operation of judgment is not in the act itself, but in the relation which it contemplates: and I cannot avoid thinking that the understanding or judgment, or whatever you call it, has as much title to be called conscience, when it recognises the relation of equality which the parts bear to the whole, as when it recognises the relation of agreement between our circumstances and our characters.

The writer to whom I referred just now, the late Mr. Grove, of Taunton, objects, very consistently with his principles, against denominating conscience “a power or faculty of the mind.” If I thought that the moral judgment of which we have been speaking is to be traced to conscience, and that the moral emotion arises from some other part of our nature, I should agree with him. If the mind has had a faculty given to it, called reason, or judgment, or understanding, by which it is enabled to distinguish truth from falsehood, to decide on the

* [The Rev. Henry Grove taught Pneumatology and Ethics in an academy at Taunton. He was an extensive author, and an elegant writer. After his death, which took place in 1738, two volumes on *Moral Philosophy* were published,—this is the work referred to in the text. This was not his only posthumous publication.]

probability or improbability of an event, to combine means for the attainment of ends, *i. e.* if God has so formed the mind as to render all this possible, which no one doubts, nothing can, I apprehend, be more inaccurate than to represent our capacity to decide upon the agreement of our actions with our circumstances and relations as a distinct power or faculty. Conscience, if the term properly designate this capacity, is manifestly, as Grove says, not a distinct power from reason. Or rather, as I should say, the power of reason, or conscience, resolves itself into that general power by which we are capable of recognising relations. For what is truth but the conformity of words to things, *i. e.* a relation? What is the probability of an event, but its accordance or congruity with the various circumstances of time, place, &c., in which it is said to have happened, *i. e.* a relation? What is the adaptation of means to ends, but a relation? What is the agreement of our actions with the circumstances in which we stand, in reference to God and to one another, but a relation? And if the mind be endowed with the one power of recognising relations, that one power will unfold to us the whole of these relations, as well as all others; as the one principle of attraction accounts both for the resistance which a body offers to our attempts to stop its descent to the earth, and to raise it after it has fallen. An unnecessary multiplication of faculties is as grievous a fault in the science of mind, as an unnecessary multiplication of properties would be in the science of matter. What should we say of a natural philosopher who, in illustration of the fact that a plummet suspended from the side of a mountain is drawn by its influence a little out of the perpendicular, should state that it has two distinct properties,—by one

of which it tends to the mountain, and by the other to the earth? I fear, we should at once say that our philosopher's mind was not endowed with the faculty of generalization; or he would instantly have perceived that the slight divergence of the plummet from the perpendicular position, and its near approach to that position, were facts which resolved themselves into the general tendency of all matter to approach to all matter, *i. e.* into the one property of attraction. In the philosophy of mind, how can it then be regarded as less flagrantly improper to ascribe the recognition of the conformity of words to things, or of the adaptation of means to ends to reason or judgment, and the recognition of the agreement of our actions with our circumstances and relations to conscience?

Before I proceed to show where Grove and others, who have denied conscience to be a distinct power of the mind, are in error, I would call you to observe the bearing of the preceding statements upon that baneful and irrational tenet of the sceptical philosophy, that there is no right and wrong in actions,—that our notions of some as virtuous do not grow out of the constitution of the mind, but are mere prejudices inspired by the customs or laws of the country or the age in which we live. This sceptical tenet is founded on the different moral estimate which is formed of the same action in various countries and ages. In Sparta theft was permitted by law, and when undiscovered viewed with approbation; in England, it is execrated and punished. Upon this pernicious doctrine, perhaps I may be permitted to quote the remarks which have been in the publication already alluded to, as the work is not, I believe, in the hands of many. “Nothing more is necessary to overthrow it, than to refer to the general agree-

ment in the moral judgments of men, which, after every allowance has been made for the difference of opinion referred to above, will be found to exist. With some trifling diversity—a diversity for which it is by no means difficult to account—there is a great and general and remarkable uniformity. For one who views theft and infanticide, and parricide, without detestation, we can point to thousands and tens of thousands who cannot revert to them, even in thought, without the warmest feelings of moral abhorrence. And this fact, as we have said, completely overturns the sceptical doctrine. Because—for such must be the language of the objector, if he adhere to truth and fact—in one case out of five hundred, or five thousand, there exists a difference of judgment in reference to actions, actions have *no* moral character. It is surely sufficient to reply,—Because in the remaining five hundred, or five thousand [but one], there is an agreement, actions *have* a moral character. If his argument has any weight, ours must have weight; for they rest on the same basis, viz. that the moral judgments of men may be regarded as evidence of the moral character of actions. And the argument, if it be allowed at all, throws much greater weight into our scale than his. The general rule is with us; the exceptions with him. The moral judgments of *men*—of the race at large—are on our side of the question; the moral judgment of a *few* only on his. The probability certainly is, that the correct judgment is with the many; the mistaken one with the few. Were an individual to call an object black, which all other men considered scarlet, we should instantly decide, not surely that the colour was not scarlet, and that the notion of colour was a mere prejudice, for which there was no foundation in our nature, but that the eyes of the observer were the subjects of dis-

ease.”* To these statements I will only add, that the doctrine laid down exhibits the reason why the moral judgment of the race is with us, and that of the few only with the sceptic. If God has endowed the mind with the faculty of recognising relations, it is surely not wonderful that the agreement between actions and circumstances—which, as we have seen, is a relation—should be generally perceived. Nor, when it is recollected how much custom and education, &c., may pervert the judgment, and how little man is disposed to exert the powers which God has given him, without which they cannot be expected to guide him aright, is it, on the other hand, wonderful that this agreement should in some cases not be recognised. To argue from hence, as the sceptical philosopher does, that when the notions of certain actions as virtuous do arise in the mind, they are mere prejudices—not growing out of the mental constitution, and so disproving the rectitude of actions themselves—is, I will venture to say, ineffably absurd. Why does not the sceptic generalize, and say that all our notions of relations are prejudices, having no cause for their existence in the nature which God has given us? He is bound to do this, to be consistent. He is bound to tell us, that it is a prejudice to suppose that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, for their equality is only a relation; that the whole is greater than its part, for the words only affirm a relation. Were he to proceed thus to stultify himself by his consistency, I would tell him that he reasons on radically false premises; that no notion which the human mind, in a sane state, forms,

* [*Elements of Mental and Moral Science*, Third Edition, p. 339. There is a *verbal* discrepancy between the above quotation and the *Third Edition*; but not, the Editor presumes, between it and the *First Edition*, a copy of which he has not by him.]

in the proper use of its powers, ought to be degraded and cashiered as a prejudice. Such it cannot be. In the circumstances supposed, it must originate in the constitution which our Maker has given us; and it were to libel that great Being, to affirm that a constitution coming from him can delude, and thereby destroy us.

To return to Mr. Grove. He affirms that conscience is no other than the reasoning or judicative faculty of the mind; and yet he ascribes to conscience those feelings of self-condemnation which follow the commission of sin. It is here that, in my judgment at least, he is manifestly in error. An emotion can never be traced to the reason or judgment. The intellect can no more give us feelings, than the sensitive part of our nature can give us notions or ideas. In saying this, I do not forget that the mind is one and indivisible,—that we must not suppose that what we call its powers are separate parts of the mind, and as distinct from each other as the head and the various members of the body. Yet though this is true, the powers of thought, and of feeling or emotion, do not necessarily involve one another. That constitution of mind, which would have rendered us capable of the one, might not have rendered us capable of the other; or it would follow, for anything I can see to the contrary, that because the mind of brutes (which is doubtless as immaterial as that of man) can feel, it must be able to judge and reason. The Creator might have formed as pure intelligences, so to speak, with the capacities of comparing, judging, reasoning, &c., but without an atom of feeling. Our minds might have had all the transparency of ice, and all its coldness too. The mind, which is designed by the Creator to feel, must be constituted differently from that which was intended merely to judge, *i. e.* it must have conferred upon it a different

power or faculty. The statement then of Grove, that conscience is no other than the reasoning or judicative faculty of the mind, is essentially defective, unless it could be shown that the moral emotion, of which I have more than once spoken, has its origin in some other part of our nature than conscience. Few however will think of maintaining this. The worm that dieth not, of which the Scriptures speak, and to the attack of which the unrighteous will be exposed in a future state of being, is surely not a bare perception of duty, but deep remorse for having violated it.

I regard conscience, then, as belonging to that part of our moral nature from whence arise the feelings of approbation or disapprobation, on the recognition of actions as virtuous or vicious. There is a right and a wrong in actions. By giving us judgment, our Maker has rendered us capable of perceiving their rectitude or their sinfulness; by endowing us with the susceptibility of moral emotion, he secures our approving of one, and disapproving of the other. That we have this faculty, or that the mind has been formed to approve what is right, as well as to discern it, is to me undoubted. Let the appeal be made to consciousness; and it will be found that the man who errs in argument, and the man who deviates from the rule of moral rectitude, are viewed with very different feelings. It is the judgment which detects what is incorrect, both in the reasoning and the conduct; but, in the latter case, there is a vivid emotion of disapprobation subsequent to the judgment, which never follows a mere mistake of ratiocination. And if we gather the verdict of observation and experience, we shall find it in perfect harmony with the testimony of consciousness. Men, who have shaken off the fetters of moral restraint, may be held together by motives of interest,

but not by feelings of mutual respect. If they admire each other's talents, they cannot approve of each other's principles and conduct: the thing is incredible, impossible. The mind has no susceptibility of approving vice, considered as such; and therefore an unholy brotherhood of beings, linked together for the accomplishment of some nefarious scheme, has been frequently broken up through the mutual suspicions engendered by a feeling of each other's utter worthlessness. I think then I may regard it as proved, that God has endowed the mind with the susceptibility of moral emotion. And if I am correct, it will perhaps strike many of you who are familiar with the subject, that there is some resemblance between the doctrine maintained by me and the statements of the celebrated Dr. Hutcheson.* To account for the origin of our ideas of right and wrong, that able writer supposes that God has endowed us with what he calls "a moral sense;" meaning by that expression a power within us different from reason, which renders certain actions pleasing, and certain others displeasing to us. Through the medium of the external senses, certain flavours and odours become the source of pleasure to us; by means of the moral sense, in like manner, certain affections and actions of moral agents excite moral approbation and disapprobation, leading to the formation of moral judgments. Now if, in this scheme of Hutcheson, the term sense were understood to be synonymous with susceptibility,—so that when we speak of a moral sense, we were to be understood to mean only a susceptibility of moral feeling of some sort,—we might be allowed to have a moral sense, because we have unquestionably a susceptibility of moral emotion. It is doubtful,

* [Dr. F. Hutcheson died in the year 1747; but his work on *Moral Philosophy* was not published till the year 1755.]

however, whether Hutcheson did not mean something more by it. He wished, as I have stated elsewhere, to account for the origin of our notions of right and wrong; which he would not have conceived himself to have done by merely showing how approbation and disapprobation arise. It was necessary to call in the aid of a moral sense; and then, as the philosophy of the times taught that by means of the external senses we gain perceptions or ideas, as they were called, it seemed to follow that by means of the moral sense we may gain moral sensations and moral perceptions, or ideas of right and wrong.

But though it is tolerably manifest, I trust, that conscience belongs to the sensitive part of our nature, and is not the reasoning or judicative faculty, it yet remains a question whether there be any difference between the moral sense,—understanding the words loosely, or as indicative of that general susceptibility which we have ascribed to the mind of approving what is right, and disapproving what is wrong,—and conscience properly so called. Some writers think that the emotions of self-approbation and remorse, or those which arise on a review of our own conduct, are radically the same with those with which we contemplate the conduct of others. Dr. Brown more correctly, as it appears to me, distinguishes between them. “The emotions,” says he, “with which we regard the virtues and vices of others are very different from those with which we regard the same vices and virtues as our own. There is the distinctive moral feeling indeed in both cases, whether the generous sacrifice or the malignant atrocity, which we consider, be the deed of another, or of our own heroic kindness or guilty passion; but in the one case, there is something far more than mere approbation, however pleasing, or

mere disapprobation, however disagreeable. There is the dreadful moral regret, arising from the certainty that we have rendered ourselves unworthy of the love of men and the approbation of God." His description of the counterpart it is unnecessary to mention. It is further manifest to me, also, that moral regret or remorse is essentially different both from mere regret and moral disapprobation, from the fact that, how dear soever the offender may be to us, and with whatever bitterness of feeling we may contemplate his misconduct, there does not arise anything like the feeling of remorse. Our hearts may be broken by the delinquencies of others, but conscience condemns only ourselves. And hence I have spoken of conscience as a power or susceptibility of mind distinct from all others, rendering us capable of experiencing powerful emotions of self-approbation or condemnation, on the retrospect of our actions as right or wrong.

Having endeavoured to explain the physical nature of conscience, we must proceed to consider the final cause of its implantation in the mind, or the design of the Creator of the mind in endowing it with this faculty. Upon this point, though it has been partially touched upon already, I think it desirable to make a few more remarks. All writers, who conceive of conscience as identifying itself with the intellectual part of our nature, represent it as intended to be the moral rule or guide of our conduct in reference to God and to each other. "The rule of the moral nature of actions," says one, "is twofold, external and internal; the first supreme, the latter subordinate. The internal, subordinate, and immediate rule of every man's actions is his own conscience; the external, supreme, and ultimate, is the law of God. His actions must be tried by his con-

science, and his conscience itself by the Divine law." It is needless for me to say that I, of course, cannot admit the correctness of this representation. It stands, in fact, in direct opposition to all that has been advanced. If conscience does not give us the notions of right and wrong, it is impossible that it could be designed by the Creator to be a moral guide. That moral guide is Divine revelation. It is in itself perfect. Coming from God, it could not fail to be so. It renders unnecessary the existence of any other guide,—of course I mean to those beings who enjoy it, and possess sufficient powers to understand its statements; and no other being, at least in this world, comes within the range of moral government. I shall not, after what has been said, be understood as denying that we have the power of forming notions of right and wrong, because I refuse to acknowledge that such is the office of conscience. Our Maker and Ruler has given us a mind capable of recognising the fitness and rectitude of the commands he addresses to us; and this power of discerning the justice of his laws answers important purposes in moral government: but it is to judgment, and not to conscience, that we are to ascribe this power. The final cause of the implantation of the principle of conscience in our nature —or the object which the Moral Governor seeks to attain by it—is not to teach us duty, but to secure the performance of it. To understand this fully, it will be necessary to unfold the nature of God's moral government, and the different agencies and modes by which he effects his purposes in the material or natural, and the moral world. I can of course give you only a hasty sketch of a subject of boundless extent, and of deep and overwhelming importance.

Divine government is exercised over the material

part of the creation; but it is of a kind adapted to its nature. Certain phenomena in the physical world are intended by God to be permanently exhibited; or, in other words, certain motions—for all the phenomena of the physical universe are motions—are designed by him to be perpetuated throughout every part of the system, till the moment of the extinction shall arrive. Now how does God secure the certain and regular existence of these motions? He does not command, except in a figurative sense, the apple to go to the earth, when it is separated from the tree; nor the moon to raise the tides; nor the dew to deposit its treasures most plentifully where they are most needed; nor the contaminated and poisonous air which issues from the lungs to ascend, and thus make room for a constant supply of that which constitutes the pabulum of life. But he accomplishes his purpose by imparting certain powers or properties to material bodies, and thus ensuring their action upon one another, so as to secure the very object he has in view—the motions he wishes to be performed; while these material agents, as we call them, have no design to render obedience, and are utterly unconscious of doing it.

Divine government again is exercised over the brute creation, but in a manner totally different. In a brute, the spring or cause of motion is in the animal itself. It can move without being moved by anything external, which dead unconscious matter cannot. How then does God govern the brute, or secure the performance of those actions which he intends it to perform? Here again no command is employed. No revelation of the will of the Creator is made to the brute. Upon a being not capable of understanding revelations and commands, they would obviously be thrown away. But

certain instinctive tendencies are implanted in the mind of the brute, which lead to the mode of action which the Creator designs to secure. Under their impulse the hen clucks, and the bird builds its nest, but not with any foresight of the results in either case, far less any intention to secure them, and least of all with any design of rendering an act of obedience to the Creator; though it is all the time most manifestly fulfilling his will.

God's government again is exercised over man, but in a manner essentially different from those which have just been considered. Here also the spring or cause of actions is in the being governed; for all the deeds for which we shall be held to be responsible are voluntary,—their immediate cause is an act of will or volition. What method then does the Moral Governor adopt, in the case of man, to secure the actions which are in harmony, as we have seen, with the varied and complicated relations in which he stands. I answer—First, that he gives him, in that revelation of which we have been speaking, an ample statement of the conduct which is required of him. Secondly, that he connects happiness with obedience, and misery with disobedience, and thus seeks to originate and direct volition, which is the proximate cause of action in an accountable creature. In no other way is it possible for God to govern such a creature. He must be so constituted as that the direct cause of his actions is volition. He must be left to act voluntarily. To conceive of a responsible being, whose actions are the result of instinct, not volition,—or who, if he possesses the faculty of volition, is restrained by resistless power from doing what he will, is to imagine what is ineffably absurd. And if voluntary action be essential to responsibility, the Creator can exercise no

government over an accountable agent but through the medium of the will. Were he to employ physical power, to secure by its direct influence the actions he has commanded, he would by that act put the man beyond the range of moral government. He would indeed divest him of his agency. Were he to employ no moral power, or to direct no influence to bear upon his will, with a view to secure the voluntary performance of the prescribed actions, he would put himself out of the station of governor altogether. He would be a ruler without ruling. Moral influence—the influence of inducements fitted to originate and regulate volition—is the only species of influence adapted to the nature and circumstances of an accountable agent, the only species of influence which does not destroy his accountability. In governing man God employs this kind of influence, and he employs no other. Now there is nothing which can operate as an inducement to volition, and to consequent action, but the prospect of some good to be attained, or some evil to be avoided (which, however, is the same thing), by the performance of the action.

God then, as I have said, governs men, or seeks to secure the performance of those actions which harmonize with his relations, by connecting happiness with obedience; and misery with disobedience. He teaches us to look forward to a day of future account, when to those who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, he will render eternal life; but tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first, and also the Gentile. And by thus appealing to the powerful principles of hope and of fear,—principles which, to say the least, powerfully prompt to volition, if indeed one of them can be distinguished from it,—he exerts

his influence as Moral Governor upon the minds of his subjects.

But this is not all. He connects obedience with happiness, and disobedience with misery, in the present world, by the loss of reputation, property, health, and peace of mind to which it exposes. I request you now, however, particularly to reflect upon the dreadful agony which conscience inflicts, when we cannot escape the conviction that we have done wrong; for it is especially in the connection of the feeling of remorse with disobedience that we recognise the care and influence of the Moral Governor to prevent it. In human governments the punishment of transgression may not be certain,—or if certain, it is distant, and remains to be inflicted by the hands of another. But it is the perfection of the Divine government to make sin its own punishment. No interval elapses between the sentence of guilty, passed by the mind of the transgressor, and the execution of punishment. No chance of escape is afforded. By a wonderful provision—a provision which of itself would prove that there is a God that judgeth in the earth—the transgressor is made to chastise himself. Conscience takes the sword of justice, and strikes the avenging blow; and the wound is the deeper, and more rancorous and deadly, because it is given by ourselves.

The mind has then been invested with the principle of conscience to impel to the discharge of duty. It is one of the instruments of God's moral government, by which he aims to influence volition—the proximate cause from which all the actions of accountable creatures must flow. Its existence and its influence prove that we are the subjects of moral government, and that the design of our great Ruler is to lead us to abstain from that which is evil, and to follow that which is good.

I have now to call your attention to a few remarks on the *authority* and *claims* of conscience. Those writers who, with Grove, have regarded conscience as intended to supply us with a moral rule of action subordinate to the law of God, have felt somewhat perplexed to decide what judgment should be pronounced upon the conduct of a man, when the two rules direct to different modes of conduct; conscience, for instance, enjoining the performance of an action which the law of God forbids, or the contrary. They could not conceal from themselves that great practical mischief might result from avowing the sentiment, that what a man thinks right, becomes on that account right to him,—so that he is not only at liberty to do, but absolutely bound to do the action, whatever may happen to be its character; for in that case, if a man should be able to persuade himself that falsehood, and theft, and murder, are morally right actions, and should act in harmony with his principles, he would deserve and might obtain the praise and the reward of virtue. I do not say, that it would be easy or even possible for a man to persuade himself of this. I admit that I have put an extreme case; but who does not know that the best way to try a principle is to try it upon a case of this description? And yet if conscience were given to us by God for the purpose of constituting a moral rule of action, it seemed equally impossible, on the other hand, to say that its directions should ever be disregarded. I believe it would be generally said, by those writers to whom I now refer, that we should in every case obey the dictates of conscience; but that we should seek to have our consciences enlightened by the external and supreme rule of duty—the law of God: and that if criminality attach to us when we do a wrong action, thinking it to be a right one, that crimi-

nality rests upon the previous negligence, which had prevented our attaining juster conceptions of duty. The case of the apostle Paul has ever appeared to me to involve these writers in difficulty. Before his conversion to the Christian faith, he persecuted its adherents; and if there be any conduct which is self-evidently wrong, I am disposed to say that persecution on account of religious opinion is that conduct. The intellect of a brute might almost recognise its atrocious character. Yet Paul persecuted conscientiously. He thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of the Lord; and he acted as he thought. Yet the circumstance of his conscience being on the side of persecution did not divest his conduct of guilt, nor free him of blame; for he more than once alludes to this act afterwards, and represents it as having constituted one of his greatest sins. On this account, as well as others which have been already mentioned, I am disposed to deny that conscience is a moral rule; and the whole of the latter statement especially leads me very much to doubt the correctness, and far more the practical expediency of seeking for any subordinate rule of conduct in the mind at all, which, while it is professedly subordinated to the law of God, is in danger of being in practice exalted above it. I admit of course that God has given to us an understanding capable of comprehending the requirements of his law: that, is essential to accountability. I admit further, that he has formed our minds capable of recognising the rectitude of his commands. I admit further still, that where Divine revelation is not possessed, this natural power of distinguishing right from wrong, being the only moral guide, must be used as such. But where Divine revelation is enjoyed, I submit it to this respectable assembly, that it

is of vast practical importance to regard it exclusively as our moral guide—to seek for no internal and subordinate rule of duty; for the danger is, that this rule will not maintain its subordination, as Grove says it ought to do, to the external and supreme rule, but form its decisions on other principles and data, so that, as in the case of Paul, the two rules may give different directions. I submit it to you, as a point of great practical importance, that we should go for direction immediately and directly to the Bible; exerting the utmost vigour of our minds, and every power which God has given us, to comprehend and apply its directions; and regarding our discernment of the justice of those directions rather as one of the means which the Moral Governor employs to secure obedience to them, than as designed to supply a rule for our conduct. I am well aware, it may be said that our conception of the meaning of those directions must, after all, regulate our conduct; and I have no wish to deny this. But there is an important difference in the practical tendency of two directions, one of which calls upon a man to do in all cases what *appears* to him to be right, and another which tells him that he is bound to do in all cases what is *really* right. The former direction does not send him to the infallible standard of truth and duty, which God has put into our hands. The latter does. It teaches him, that if his actions are at variance with the requirements of the law of God, that law will not hold him guiltless, even though the condemning voice of conscience should never be heard; since that law, like every other, assumes that its commands might have been known: and it would overturn all government whatever, to accept of ignorance of any precept as a legal excuse for its violation, when the ignorance is not necessary but voluntary.

Permit me then to address myself for a moment especially to the younger part of my audience, and to exhort them, with all the earnestness of a friend who wishes their happiness, and who knows that happiness is nowhere to be found but in the path of rectitude, to make it your fixed and exalted purpose to do at all times what is right. Leave it to others to listen to the call of interest, or of temporary and licentious gratification; and be it your nobler determination to listen to the call of duty. You will be exposed to powerful temptations to step aside from the path of rectitude; and there are principles within you which will give force and urgency to these temptations. But do I say yield? No; not in a single instance. May we not once, just once, step from that path, to pluck the inviting fruit which lies beyond it? I answer again, Not once—lest you should never return. Your safety lies in guarding against the first aberration; for, comparatively insignificant though it may be, it robs the mind of conscious moral purity. The youth who has fallen once by temptation sinks in his own esteem: he loses the support of the good opinion of others; or if they continue it to him, in ignorance of what has happened, he has the humbling and withering consciousness that he no longer deserves it. And if it be difficult to confine the river to its proper course, when its banks are perfect, what may not be expected to happen when they are broken down? The powerful feeling of remorse too, which springs up to punish the first transgression, and which practically says “ You have entered upon the path of dishonour and danger and death—Return,” will, if trifled with and disregarded, abate in the urgency of its remonstrances, and refuse, if at length it should find it unavailing, to lift the voice of condemnation at all. And if there be a being in the

universe to be pitied, it is the man, especially the young man, who can sin without the rebuke of conscience; or in whom the moral principle is so far extinguished, that the laugh or sneer of the thoughtless and vicious is dreaded more than the expostulating voice of God in the bosom. The utmost ruin which a man can bring upon himself is to silence the voice of conscience. It sinks him to utter degradation in his passage through the world, and prepares for him a dreadful departure out of it: for in the solitude of the sick chamber, when disease has prostrated the strength and spirits of the sufferer, then, at that awful moment, when the mightiest consolations and the brightest hopes are needed, the entrance of Death will awake that voice which had been slumbering before; and as the scenes of time close upon the unhappy being, his spirit passes into eternity, carrying with it the dreadful consciousness that his conduct forbids that any regret at his departure should be felt in the world he is leaving, and supplies no hope of welcome in that upon which he is about to enter.

Guard then, I again beseech you, against the first lapse from moral purity. Let no temptation triumph over you; and if you tremble, as you reflect upon your own weakness, seek, I conjure you, to sustain your feebleness by that Omnipotence which is ever ready to support the feeble virtue of man. Let the prayer of faith be addressed to your Father who is in heaven; and that gracious Being, who heareth the ravens when they cry, will not turn away his ears from the petition of a being whom he has formed in his own image, and when the petition seeks to prevent the defacing of that image by sin.

LECTURE VI.

MIRACLES—AN ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

Miracle, nature of:—miracles, a conclusive evidence of a Divine mission:—testimony confers validity on a report of miraculous interposition:—the first preachers of Christianity rested their appeal on miracles:—the Founder of Christianity must have performed acts that had the *appearance* of miracles:—if he did not perform *real* miracles, his apostles were either *deceivers* or were themselves *deceived*, neither possible,—Christ therefore performed *real* miracles, and Christianity is from God.

In a former lecture, in which I endeavoured to prove the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament, it was stated that the Divinity of the Christian religion is to be carefully distinguished from the authenticity of those records in which its nature is exhibited. Let us suppose that we had lived eighteen hundred years ago, in some remote corner of the land of Judea, in a spot which the Saviour in the course of his personal ministry had not visited. Let us further suppose, that intelligence was brought to us that in Jerusalem, and in the adjacent places, there had appeared a singular individual, calling himself the Messiah, affirming that he was the bearer of a revelation from God; and that he had performed many at any rate *apparent* miracles—he

himself affirming that they were *real* miracles—in confirmation of his Divine mission. Now if this report had excited any degree of attention and curiosity on our part, what in all probability would have been our conduct? Should we not have immediately inquired what was the nature of the religion which he taught? and what were those seemingly miraculous actions to which he appealed, in proof of his assertions that it was a supernatural communication from God? And having obtained the desired information, we should have felt that we were put into a situation which enabled us to form a judgment whether the new system, together with its Teacher, deserved any further regard or not. Now, by proving the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament, I have placed you in the situation supposed. At least the only difference is, that I have laid before you a printed instead of a verbal account of the nature of Christianity, and of those evidences to which its original Apostle appealed in proof of his Divine mission.

We proceed then now to the important inquiry,—“Is that religion whose nature is exhibited in the Scriptures of the New Testament of Divine origin?” “Is the evidence to which the appeal is made sufficient to prove that Christ and his apostles were sent by God?” This latter question leads to another,—“What is the evidence itself?” In the short outline of this course of lectures, which some of you may have seen, it is arranged in four classes: the evidence supplied by miracles—by prophecy—by the rapid diffusion of Christianity—and by the books of the New Testament themselves, or the internal marks which they exhibit of a Divine origin. It would not, however, require perhaps any very extraordinary powers of analysis to resolve the whole four into one, viz. into the evidence of miracles. For what

is the gift of prophecy, but a miraculous power to foretel future events? What was the rapid diffusion of Christianity, but the miraculous triumph of the truth which it exhibits over the prejudice, and depravity, and opposition of the world? What is the internal evidence of which we have just spoken, but a miraculous display of wisdom and benevolence?—what is it but a perfection, and a dignity, and a grace, given to the form and features of the religion which it unfolds, which none but a Divine artist could have imparted?

It is not necessary however—neither would it be of any great practical utility—to be thus minute in our analysis. Miracles, and prophecy, and the remaining divisions, may be regarded as constituting four independent and distinct sources of evidence; at all events, each is so far peculiar as to render it proper to consider them separately.

I begin with MIRACLES. What I would wish to advance on this subject may be comprehended under the following heads.

I shall, *first*, very briefly explain the nature of a miracle; *secondly*, show that, when appealed to for that purpose, miracles may be safely regarded as affording direct and conclusive evidence of a Divine mission; *thirdly*, that it is in the power of testimony to confer validity upon a miraculous report; *fourthly*, that the first preachers of Christianity appealed to the evidence of miracles in confirmation of their Divine mission; *fifthly*, that the Founder of Christianity must, accordingly, have performed actions which had, at least, the appearance of being miraculous; and *sixthly*, that if we deny these actions to have been *really* miraculous, it follows that the apostles must have been deceived, or deceivers,—but that, since it is impossible to conceive

them to have been either the one or the other, the wonderful works which, according to our accounts, proved to be authentic, are ascribed to Christ were not *pretended* but *real* miracles; and consequently that Christianity is, without doubt, a revelation from God.

Upon some of the first in this chain of propositions I may, or rather I must, be very brief; and it will be necessary for you to recollect that an argument, which requires considerable time and space for its full development, cannot but suffer injury when condensed into the short compass which my limits allow to it.

FIRST.—What then are we to understand by “a miracle?”

The term, in its original sense, is a word of equivalent import with “wonder;” but “in its more appropriate signification—in the sense in which we now employ it—it denotes an effect contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a manifest and real deviation from the known laws of nature.” That the operations of nature proceed in a regular and uniform manner, or that events sustain an unvarying relation to one another—at least with certain exceptions—as causes and effects, is a fact which falls under our observation, and cannot possibly be denied. The expression “the laws of nature” is a phrase embodying the sentiment which has just been laid before you; it denotes the settled order in which the events or changes which constitute all the phenomena of the physical world take place. It does not denote, nor is it meant to denote, efficiency; but the manner in which, or the rules according to which, efficiency develops itself. The descent of a stone to the earth, for instance, when thrown up into the air, without any actual impulse (besides attraction) in that direction, is an event in har-

mony with the unvarying course of things, or, as we call it, with the great law of gravitation. That the same stone should leave the ground, and mount up into the air, without any ordinary physical impulse to cause the ascent, would be an event at variance with the course of things—a violation of the great law of gravitation; *i.e.* it would be a miracle.

From the preceding statement, it appears that “before we can pronounce an event to be a true miracle, the circumstances under which it was produced must be known, and the common course of nature must be understood; for in all those cases in which we are totally ignorant of nature, it is impossible to determine what is, or what is not, a deviation from her course. Miracles are not then, as some have represented them, appeals to our ignorance. They suppose some antecedent knowledge of the course of nature, without which no proper judgment can be formed respecting them; though with it their reality may be so apparent as to leave no room for doubt or disputation. Thus, were a physician to give instantly sight to a blind man, by anointing his eyes with a chemical preparation, which we had never before seen, and to the nature and qualities of which we were absolute strangers, the cure would to us undoubtedly be wonderful; but we could not pronounce it miraculous, because it might be the physical effect of the unguent on the eye. But were he to give sight to his patient merely by commanding him to receive it, or by anointing his eyes with spittle, we should with the utmost confidence pronounce the cure to be a miracle; because we know perfectly that neither the human voice, nor human spittle, has, by the established constitution of things, any such power over the diseases of the eye.”

SECONDLY.—I am to show that, when appealed to for

that purpose, miracles may be safely regarded as affording direct and conclusive evidence of a Divine mission.

In point of fact, there can be little doubt that the kind of evidence to which we now refer would extort the confession from any of us, that the being who should appeal to it successfully before our eyes was really a messenger from God. Suppose an individual in this assembly were to announce, with deep and appropriate solemnity, that he was the bearer of a Divine revelation to us, and, in support of this important assertion, were to command with effect the paper I hold in my hand to be transformed into a serpent,—would it be possible for us to refuse our assent to credentials of a Divine mission so completely satisfactory? I apprehend not. Nor is the confidence we should repose in his character, and office, unintelligible, unreasonable, and unfounded. Powerful considerations justify it.

First.—The obvious display of such supernatural power affords the highest ground of presumption that he who possesses it is endowed also with supernatural knowledge. If God (such would be our conclusion) has rendered him so superior to me in one respect, why not in another? The conclusion would be felt to be irresistible, that he who can *do* so much more, must *know* much more than we.

Secondly.—The exertion of preternatural power must be regarded as the affixing of the Divine seal to accredit the character and the mission of the individual. All but atheists believe that God has ordained the laws of nature, or determined the order in which those events which constitute the phenomena of the physical world shall take place; and therefore—whether those events result from his immediate agency, or are to be ascribed to certain powers or tendencies which he has imparted

to what we call physical causes—it is impossible to conceive that an order of his own establishment can be reversed, or even violated, without his permission. To the universe in general it is of vast importance, but to us it is pre-eminently important, that the regular order of sequence in the phenomena of the natural world should be preserved inviolate. As the result of this order, we are enabled to foresee and to provide for the physical wants which are to arise; without which foresight the creatures for whom God has so bountifully provided must have been left to perish, as it has been beautifully said, “ignorant and irresolute amid elements that are waiting to obey them, and victims of confusion in the midst of all the harmonies of the universe.”

Now in proportion to the importance of preserving the order of nature is the confidence we may cherish, and ought to cherish, that it will not be violated without His permission who ordained it. I have no doubt whatever, indeed, that we might go further than this, and affirm that no deviation from the laws of nature can take place, *i. e.* that no miracle can be performed but by the immediate agency of God. I hold the supposition that spirits, either good or bad, can perform miracles, or that the power of effecting them can be properly speaking communicated to men, to be little short of a self-evident absurdity. I am quite prepared to maintain the opinion, that the supposition of a miraculous event coming to pass, without a direct exertion of Divine power, is, in fact, the supposition of an effect without a cause. There can be no cause of a miracle—*i. e.* of an event which does not take place through the immediate influence of those powers and tendencies which God has bestowed upon physical causes—but the immediate volition of Deity; and consequently a

miracle, wrought in confirmation of any doctrine, must be considered as the broad seal of heaven to its truth. I do not, however, enlarge upon this point, because my argument does not require me to do it. The train of reasoning which I have laid before you, with the view of showing that miracles are conclusive proofs of a Divine mission, remains impregnable, if only it be the case that no miracle—*i. e.* no interruption of the laws of nature—can take place without the Divine permission; since there is no truth, in the whole range of moral science, to which the mind surrenders itself with more entire and unwavering confidence, than to the statement that the blessed God, whose goodness is unbounded and infinite, will not permit any agent whatever to work a miracle in support of a lie—in confirmation of a system of religion which, being radically false, must be dishonourable to his character, and dangerous to his government. I could as soon believe that the part is greater than its whole, as that our Father who is in heaven would permit his creatures to be placed in circumstances which could hardly fail to entrap them to their own destruction! Away with the impious thought. If Jehovah *can* prevent the occurrence of a miracle, when a false prophet attempts to practise upon the credulity of mankind, be assured, my hearers, that he *will* do it; and to say that he cannot is practically to deny that he is God. For what is our conception of God, but the notion of a being who created, and who of course sustains and rules, all the agencies and beings in the universe,—without whom they can no more continue to act than they could have sprung into existence, and at whose volition, if such volition should arise, all their countless multitudes—everything in heaven, earth, and hell—every form of existence in the wide extent

of creation—things material and things immaterial—thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers—would all in a moment sink into that state of oblivion from which they originally emerged, and the mighty and stable universe, with all its life and joy, would dissolve into the “void profound of unessential night?”

I have said all that my time will allow me to say in support of the second proposition, viz. that miracles supply us with direct and conclusive proof of a Divine mission.

THIRDLY.—I pass on now to show that it is in the power of testimony to confer validity upon a miraculous report.

The statements which will need to be laid before you on this part of the subject are in character totally different from those to which I have just directed your attention. I had then to encounter the objection—for such it is in substance—that a miracle does not prove a Divine mission, because it may be effected by some other power than that of God. The objection to which we now advance is, on the other hand, that a miracle is so stupendous a work that even the power of God is incompetent to its production; or, at least, that it is so unreasonable, if not impossible, to suppose that he will exert his power for that purpose, that no accumulation of testimony whatever is sufficient to sustain the credit of a miraculous report. “The objection,” says one well known to many of my readers, Dr. Channing, “amounts to this,—that the supernatural character of an alleged fact is of itself proof enough of its falsehood. So strong is this propensity to doubt of departures from the order of nature, that there are sincere Christians who incline to rest their religion wholly on its internal evidence, and to overlook the outward ordinary inter-

position of God, by which it was at first established. But the difficulty," adds this writer, with great truth, "cannot in this way be evaded; for Christianity is not only *confirmed* by miracles, but is *in itself*—in its very essence—a miraculous religion. It is not a system which the human mind gathered in the ordinary exercise of its powers, from the ordinary course of nature. It professes to be a supernatural communication from God. So that the objection which I have stated still presses upon us; and if it be well grounded, it is fatal to Christianity."* This highly gifted writer,—for greatly as I differ from him on religious subjects, I willingly concede to him the possession of intellect and genius, not commonly equalled, and very rarely indeed surpassed;—this highly gifted writer—whose statements I would earnestly recommend to the attention of all who have blended a little philosophy with their scepticism—tells us most justly, and most truly, that "that attention to the powers of nature which is implied in scientific pursuit has tended to weaken the practical conviction of a higher power; and the laws of the creation, instead of being regarded as the modes of Divine operation, come insensibly to be considered as fetters on his agency, as too sacred to be suspended even by their Author." I join with Dr. Channing in denouncing this feeling as essentially atheistical, and at war with all sound philosophy. I join with him in maintaining that, "to a man whose belief in God is strong and practical, a miracle will appear as possible as any other effect, as the most common event in life;" and further, since "God's adherence to the order of nature is not necessary and mechanical, but intelligent and voluntary, that to such a man a miracle will appear a probable or rather a

* Discourse on the *Evidences of Christianity*.

certain event, when the end to be answered, by a temporary suspension of the order of nature, is of more importance to the beings whom he governs, than the preservation of those laws at that moment would be." Now we maintain that such a case has occurred—that a supernatural communication from God had become necessary—that such a communication was of infinite importance to the human race—that by no other means than a temporary departure from the laws of nature could it have been proved that the communication was from him; and that, therefore, this temporary departure from those laws, to secure this object, was infinitely worthy of the Supreme Being,—since the departure itself tended to advance the very ends for which they were established, viz. the glory of the great Being who formed them, and the happiness of those for whose welfare they were designed.

But though we should discard the atheistical opinion, that miracles are beyond the power of God, or that the laws of nature are too sacred to be suspended even by their Author, so that every miraculous report ought at once to be rejected, it is still objected that no accumulation of *testimony* will justify us in admitting such a report. This is the celebrated objection of Hume. Experience, says he, is our only guide in judging of matters of fact: a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature: a firm and invariable experience has established these laws; and therefore experience has furnished us with proof against a miracle, stronger than any which can be brought to support it by testimony. I agree with the writer quoted a short time ago, that "infidelity has seldom forged a weaker weapon than this argument of Hume;" and that it would not deserve notice, were it not from the name of its author. Yet, as it is well

known, and may do mischief to those who cannot unravel the sophistries of this writer, I will make a few remarks upon it.

1. We might except against the statement, that we can only judge of the truth of a matter of fact by experience. On this, however, I cannot enlarge.

2. We might ask him what he means by experience. If by this term he intends to designate our own *personal* or *individual* experience, then must we, in addition to miracles, reject ten thousand facts which no one in his senses can deny. We must maintain that the sun is never vertical between the tropics; and that there are three hundred and sixty-five days and nights in the year, at the poles,—though it is demonstrable that there can be but one of each.

If by experience he intended to denote *general* or *universal* experience—the experience of all men, in all ages and countries; then we answer, that experience in this sense is *not* against a miracle—that the laws of nature are *not* established by a firm and invariable experience: for, in the experience of many thousands, (and Mr. Hume cannot deny this, without the most flagrant assumption of the very point in dispute,) the laws of nature have been actually suspended; so that the fact of occasional deviations from the laws of nature is as really established by experience, as the fact of the general observation of those laws.

Further: we would ask Mr. Hume how he has gained the knowledge of experience in this extended sense of the term?—how he has ascertained what is, in point of fact, the experience of all men in all ages and countries? He can only reply, By testimony. So that testimony must be believed, before he can obtain the verdict of experience; and yet—such is the gross con-

tradiction in which he involves himself—experience is to guide us whether to believe the testimony or not, *i. e.* the cause must first produce the effect, and then the effect is to decide whether the cause shall exist! It is some consolation to recollect that this is the reasoning, not of a Christian, but of an infidel.

Further: to say nothing more at present of the *hocus-pocus* manner in which Mr. Hume gains his knowledge of experience, we might ask him whether he can possibly persuade himself that he is acquainted with the experience of all the men in the world, in all ages and countries, in reference to any one of the laws of nature. It was contrary to his experience, we admit, that a dead man should come to life again—contrary to the experience of all the men with whom he had conversed—contrary to the experience of most of the men of whom he had ever heard. But had Mr. Hume conversed with all the men in the world?—had he received information of all the men in the world? Was there not a single being with whose experience Mr. Hume was not acquainted? Now if there were one, that individual—for aught that Mr. Hume could know or say to the contrary—might have had experience of a miracle: the experience of that individual might establish the possibility of a miracle. The fact is, that the attribute of omniscience is requisite to the knowledge of experience in that sense of the term which can alone support Mr. Hume's argument; for if it be anything short of what it professes to be—firm and unalterable,—*i. e.* the experience of all men, in all ages and countries,—it cannot justify any one, even on Mr. Hume's principles, in rejecting testimony in support of a fact which may be in harmony with the experience of multitudes, though we, in our ignorance, know it not.

Finally: on this subject allow me to quote a passage from Dr. Channing, which places the whole subject in a light somewhat new, but equally interesting, and correct, and important. "The argument"—*i. e.* of Hume—"is built on an ignorance of the nature of testimony; and it is surprising that this error has not been more strikingly exposed. Testimony, we are told, cannot prove a miracle. Now the truth is, that testimony of itself, and immediately, proves no fact whatever, not even the most common. Testimony can do nothing more than show us the state of another's mind in regard to a given fact. It can only show us that the testifier has a belief, a conviction, that a certain phenomenon or event has occurred. Here testimony stops; and the reality of the event is to be judged of altogether from the nature and degree of this conviction, and from the circumstances under which it exists. This conviction is an effect, which must have a cause, and needs to be explained; and if no cause can be found but the real occurrence of the event, then this occurrence is admitted as true. Such is the extent of testimony. Now a man who affirms a miraculous phenomenon or event may give us just as decisive proofs, by his character and conduct, of the strength and depth of his conviction, as if he were affirming a common occurrence. Testimony then does just as much in the case of miracles as of common events; that is, it discloses to us the conviction of another's mind. Now this conviction, in the case of miracles, requires a cause, an explanation, as much as in every other; and if the circumstances be such that it could not have sprung up and been established, but by the reality of the alleged miracle, then that great and fundamental principle of human belief, viz. that every

effect must have a cause, compels us to admit the miracle.”*

FOURTHLY.—The fourth proposition—to which we now advance, and which fortunately will not detain us long—is, that the first preachers of Christianity appealed to the evidence of miracles in confirmation of their Divine mission.

“The works that I do,” said our Lord on one occasion, “they bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.” “When John heard in the prison the works of Jesus, he sent two of his disciples”—for their satisfaction, not his own—“unto him, who said unto him, Art thou he that should come” (*i. e.* the Messiah), “or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.” During the life of Christ, he sent forth the twelve apostles to “preach the kingdom of heaven,” who affirmed that many wonderful works were performed by him,—works which rendered it manifest that he was the Messiah.

It does not then admit of a doubt, that Christ laid claim to the possession of miraculous power. Nor is it less evident, that his alleged miracles were performed openly, not in the presence of his disciples merely, but also of his avowed enemies; or, at any rate, that they were said to have been thus performed,—for I need not assume more than this to give validity to my argument:

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for when he stood up in the midst of his enemies—enemies who were plotting his destruction—he appealed to his works, saying, “The works that I do, they bear witness of me: if ye believe not me, believe the works.” Similar remarks may be made with reference to the apostles. God (so our books declared in the face of the world) bore witness to them, “both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” I dismiss this part of the subject with observing that the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, contain the actual appeal that was made by the first preachers of Christianity—the identical miraculous reports which were circulated, and on which the claims of the new religion to be an extraordinary communication from God were founded.

FIFTHLY.—Our fifth proposition is, that the Founder of Christianity must have performed actions which had, at least, the *appearance* of being miraculous.

The necessity of this partly results from the nature of the case itself, and partly from the facts stated in the previous proposition. It is impossible to conceive that the Founder of Christianity could have emerged from obscurity, and that his religion could have secured even a footing in the world, and far less gained such splendid and extensive conquests, if no action had been performed by him which was *apparently*—I do not now urge, what I am entitled to urge, *really*—miraculous in its character. In illustration of this important remark, let us put the following case. Let us suppose that an individual should make his appearance in this city, professing to bring a communication from God,—the effect of which, if received, would be the entire demolition of the existing form of religion, and the establishment of another essentially different from it, in all respects, in its stead. We

inquire perhaps—if the occurrence be deemed worthy of a second thought—into the family and connexions of this individual; and we find that his parents, with whom he had resided to the present time, have no distinction of birth, or property, or talent, to confer upon them the slightest degree of importance in the estimation of their neighbours. Now if this information did not preclude all further inquiry, we should probably be disposed to demand of this pretended prophet what credentials in support of his mission he could produce?—what proof he could exhibit that he possessed Divine authority to command us to surrender our most fondly cherished principles, and our most inspiriting hopes? And suppose we could obtain no proof at all, but his bare affirmation of the fact,—what, I ask, would be our conduct? Is it conceivable that we should enrol ourselves among the number of his followers? or rather, is it conceivable that he could obtain any followers at all? Is it conceivable that any rational beings whatever could be rendered the dupes of an artifice managed with so little dexterity? Is it in the slightest degree likely, that a single man of sense could be so egregiously befooled as to suffer himself to be enrolled amongst the apostles of the mission, and to be sent forth to the support of pretensions so wretchedly pitiable? Surely not. In harmony then with the preceding reasoning, I contend that if the Founder of the Christian dispensation, in confirmation of his mission, had not exhibited proof of the possession of miraculous power,—or, as my argument only requires me to maintain, of what appeared to be such,—it is impossible to conceive that any of the Jews, who expected a splendid temporal deliverer in the promised Saviour, and who only desired his advent on that account, would have received him as the Messiah.

The point which we are now aiming to establish—viz. that the story for which the apostles voluntarily exposed themselves to hardship and death was, and must have been, a miraculous story—is thus eloquently argued by Dr. Paley. “They had nothing else to stand upon. The designation of the person—*i. e.* to say that Jesus of Nazareth rather than any other person was the Messiah—could only be founded upon miraculous tokens attributed to him. Here were no victories, no conquests, no revolutions, no surprising elevation of fortune, no achievements of valour, or of strength, or of policy to appeal to,—no discoveries in any art or science, no great efforts of genius or learning to produce. A Galilean peasant was denounced to the world as a Divine Law-giver. A young man of mean condition, of a private and simple life, and who had wrought no deliverance for the Jewish nation, was declared to be their Messiah. This, without ascribing to him at the same time some proofs of his mission, (and what other than supernatural proof could there be?) was too absurd a claim to be either imagined, or attempted, or credited. In whatever degree, or in whatever part, the religion was *argumentative*, when it came to the question, ‘Is the carpenter’s son of Nazareth the person whom we are to receive and obey?’ There was nothing, but the miracles attributed to him, by which his pretensions could be maintained for a moment. Every controversy, and every question, must presuppose these; inasmuch as without miraculous marks and tokens” (real or pretended), “or without some such great change effected by his means on the public condition of the country, as might have satisfied the then received interpretation of these prophecies, I do not see how the question could ever have been entertained. Apollos, we read, mightily

convinced the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ; but unless Jesus had exhibited some distinction of his person, some proof of supernatural power" (or of what appeared to be such), "the argument from the Old Scriptures could have had no place. It had nothing to attach upon. A young man, calling himself the Son of God, gathering a crowd about him, and delivering to them lectures of morality, could not have excited so much as a doubt amongst the Jews whether he was the object in whom a long series of ancient prophecies terminated; from the completion of which they had formed such magnificent expectations, and expectations of a nature so different to what appeared. I mean no such doubt could exist, when they had the whole case before them,—when they saw him put to death for his officiousness, and when, by his death, the evidence concerning him was closed."

I may be reminded, perhaps, of such beings as Joanna Southcott, and of the success of her miserable pretensions to a Divine mission; but the immense difference in the two cases must not be overlooked. Wild and absurd as her notions are, they do not go, I believe, —I speak with suitable caution, for I really am not an adept in the system,—they do not go to the overturning of Christianity, but merely to an addition to its communications. Hence conversion to the prophetess does not imply the necessity, either in principle or in fact, of abjuring all faith in the religion of the country. And then a man must be as insane as the prophetess herself, who can think of comparing the success of her imposture with that with which Christianity was crowned. Why the heresy of which I now speak (I will not call it a pestilent one,—it has scarcely done mischief enough to deserve the name,) has acquired no influence, except

with a few changeable, and whimsical, and weak-headed men; while the system of truth which the New Testament reveals, constituting as it does, in a moral sense, the desired fulcrum of Archimedes, has actually moved the world! Judges upon their benches, and emperors upon their thrones, have trembled before the majesty of Christianity. Nations have prostrated themselves in subjection to it. All that is great in intellect, and lovely in virtue, has done homage to it; and hereafter shall it stand forth, in all its majesty and glory, invested by universal acclaim with the sovereignty of the world. And then the followers of Joanna have had no opposition to encounter. They are wisely permitted to avow, and to act upon their opinions. They are allowed to attire themselves precisely as they choose, whatever freaks their fancy may think it right to play. They may wear white hats, or black hats; blue coats, or drab. No British senator has been silly enough to intermeddle with them. But the primitive converts to Christianity were persecuted even unto death! How then can it be supposed, for a moment, that any individuals would have enrolled themselves among their number, if the religion had not had the basis of miraculous evidence—real or pretended—to stand upon?

Further: that the founder of Christianity, to secure as he did the establishment of that religion in the world, must have performed actions which had, at least, the appearance of being miraculous, is rendered manifest by the facts stated in the previous proposition. He actually claimed the sanction which is given by the possession of miraculous power. The same claim was made, on his behalf, by the apostles. Specific accounts of his supernatural actions were put into circulation. It was distinctly said, that he healed the sick, restored sight to

the blind, raised the dead; and that he did all this in the presence of his enemies. Now if the fact of the case had been, that he not only did not do this, but did not do anything like it—did not perform a single action which could possibly be regarded as possessing a marvellous or miraculous aspect, the detection of the falsity of these statements would have foundered the whole system at once. If, in opposition to the reasoning of the previous part of this proposition, it could have made any way, without the basis of a miraculous story to support it, which I do not believe,—it manifestly could have made none with a story of that kind which was evidently false. Such a story—*i. e.* a report of miraculous actions—the only basis on which the religion could be raised—for which there was not the slightest pretence—which was obviously sheer falsehood from beginning to end—would have been infinitely worse than no story, no report of this kind at all; and hence Mahomet, who never performed an action which had the appearance of a miracle, did not lay claim to the possession of supernatural power.

The preceding arguments fully entitle us to say, that the only question which now remains to be decided is the following; viz., “Were those actions of Christ that gave rise to the miraculous accounts which were published by his followers—and without the performance of which it is impossible to conceive, as we have proved, that he could have been received as the Messiah,—were those actions real miracles, or only pretended and apparent miracles?” This leads me to our only remaining proposition; viz.—

SIXTHLY.—That if we deny them to have been really miraculous, it follows necessarily that the apostles must either have been deceived themselves, or deceivers of

others; in other words, that they were mistaken in ascribing the actions of their Master to which we refer to a supernatural power,—or that, though they themselves took a correct view of their nature, and had discovered the deceit which the Founder of the system had in this case attempted to practise both upon them and the world, they were still determined to prosecute the scheme, and to exert every effort to establish a system of religion founded, as they well knew, in utter falsehood. If neither part of this dilemma will bear the test of examination—if the apostles cannot possibly have been *deceived*—and if the facts of the case, and the circumstances in which they delivered their testimony, afford all the evidence of which a moral truth is susceptible that they were not *deceivers*, we must admit the reality of the Christian miracles, and, by necessary consequence, the Divinity of the Christian religion.

First.—I deny then that the original witnesses and attestors of the Christian miracles can have been themselves *deceived*. That it is possible, indeed, to delude some men by unfounded pretensions to miraculous power, many occurrences in the history of the world place beyond the possibility of doubt. In every instance, however, to which allusion is now made, we may account for the success of the stratagem, by referring to the history of the transaction, or to the character of the individuals upon whom the deception was practised. We invariably find, on examination, that the pretended miraculous deeds were of an equivocal nature,—or that the individuals who witnessed them were men whose judgment, or whose fidelity, cannot be depended upon,—or that they had previously been friendly to the doctrine which the seeming miracle was wrought to establish. Now I entertain no doubt that I shall be able to show

that none of the above circumstances, which naturally induce suspicion, are found in connection with the report of the Christian miracles,—that the nature of the accounts themselves, and the characters of those by whom they were attested, join to forbid the supposition that the apostles were deceived.

First, the characters of the witnesses afford us ground of certainty that they were not deceived. I have no hesitation in declaring my conviction, that a pretended miracle-worker would select men, as the witnesses of his juggling slight-of-hand tricks, whose characters presented no point of resemblance to the character of the apostles,—men disposed to believe any improbable or monstrous statement,—men of credulous habits and of an enthusiastic temperament,—or men whose partialities or whose interests were likely to secure for him a readier admission into their confidence. Such men he would think, and think justly, would not be disagreeably suspicious and scrutinizing. They would cast a veil over every apparent failure, and give to everything which presented the appearance of success the utmost possible *éclat*. But he would shun, as he would avoid the path of the lioness robbed of her whelps, every cool, dispassionate, honest inquirer after the truth,—every man disposed, it may be, to regard all pretensions to miraculous power with suspicion, and determined at all events to submit such pretensions to the most rigid examination, before he surrendered his faith to them. And yet such men, from every account which we have of them, were the original witnesses of the miracles of our Lord. That, in the first instance, they were friendly to the system he came to establish will not be pretended. Ultimately they became so, it is true; but that was the result of the overpowering evidence of his wonderful

works. They were originally the adherents of a religion which Christ came to overthrow,—a religion which was unquestionably of Divine origin,—and a religion which “every tender and strong association,” every natural and political consideration, had greatly endeared to their hearts.

Neither did they display an enthusiastic or superstitious habit of mind. They seem, on the contrary, to have been honest, cool, inquiring, sober-minded men. There is nothing bordering upon that ardour of imagination, that wild and ungovernable fancy, which may deceive the judgment, and the senses too, in their manner of telling their story; but they relate everything with a degree of simplicity and sobriety, which says most powerfully to the understanding, and the feelings, “These men were neither deceived, nor deceivers.” In short, there is nothing in their conduct upon which the charge of enthusiasm can attach, unless it be the fact that they surrendered their faith to the new religion,—a religion at variance with their most cherished expectations, and their fondest hopes. While to appeal to that fact, in proof of the charge, is to take for granted the very point in dispute; and the conduct of the disputant who does it presents us with an instance of unfairness in argument rarely equalled, and never surpassed.

It is of less importance, however, to refer to the character of the disciples; because I shall be able to put the point, that they cannot have been deceived, beyond contradiction, or even doubt, by a reference to the actions of Christ. There is nothing in his alleged miraculous deeds at all ambiguous or doubtful. Few things can be more manifest than that the being who performed them must have been invested with supernatural power.

To evince the truth of this assertion, let us con-

template a few of the miracles Christ is said to have performed: they were of very various descriptions. He is reported, for instance, to have healed the sick, to have given sight to the blind, to have cast out devils, to have raised the dead, &c. To examine every separate act is utterly impossible; but I will direct your particular attention to a few, which prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, to every candid inquirer, that the apostles cannot have been themselves deceived. In examining these accounts, let it not be forgotten that, in reference to the events which they narrate, they did not trust to the reports of others. They were actually present when these events are said to have happened; and for the confidence which they gave to them had the testimony of their senses. On this John, in his Epistle, lays a great and a reasonable stress. "That which we have seen with our eyes" is his language, "and which our hands have handled of the Word of life, declare we unto you."

The first reported miracle to which I refer is the cure effected, at the command of Christ, upon the man whose hand had been withered. Our history relates this case most distinctly. The diseased and distressed individual applied to our Lord, soliciting a cure. Till this moment, his hand had been entirely useless. It was shrunken, and dried up: but at the command of Christ to stretch it forth, the power of motion, in obedience to volition, returned; and it was "restored whole, like as the other." Now, I ask whether those who witnessed this miracle—and there were present both friends and enemies when it is said to have been performed—were not able to ascertain, beyond dispute, the condition of the hand previous to the moment in which the miracle was attempted, and the effect which followed

the command of the Saviour? Is it possible to doubt their power of judging correctly, whether the withered limb swelled out instantaneously to its usual size, assumed its natural appearance, and became possessed of the power of motion equally with the other? Why, how was it possible for them to be deceived, in a case like this? Will any infidel venture upon the attempt of pointing out a mode by which the most accomplished impostor could, by a merely pretended cure, deceive so effectually a large company, both of friends and enemies, as to silence every objection against the reality of the miracle? I believe that few, if any, will have courage enough to do this.

The next case to which I refer you, as one in which it was impossible for the disciples to be deceived, is the reported miracle of Christ's walking upon the water. Our history relates that, in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus approached the ship which contained his disciples, walking upon the sea. When the latter first saw him, they were troubled, saying, "It is a spirit;" and they cried out for fear. To calm their apprehensions the Saviour addressed them,—"Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Still they were alarmed, and in some measure suspicious. Far from displaying that wonderful appetite for the marvellous, which is frequently the cause of deception, they manifested a degree of caution —must I add, incredulity—not to be vanquished without the most overpowering evidence. "Lord, if it be thou," said one of their number, "bid me come unto thee on the water." On a second encouraging assurance, he committed himself to the unsubstantial support of the waters; and the result was the ultimate and complete conviction that it was their Lord and Master.

Now what room was there, let me ask, for delusion

in a case like this? Could the disciples be deceived in supposing that they saw a person walking upon the water? and in their subsequent belief, when he ascended the vessel, that this person was Christ? Could Peter be deceived in supposing that he essayed to walk upon the treacherous element,—and that when he had proceeded a step or two, and found himself sinking, the Saviour stretched forth his hand, and caught, and saved him? Why our adversaries must surely be reduced to great straits, before they would venture to assert this. Their famine of argument must be greater even than that of Samaria, when “an ass’s head was sold for four-score pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove’s dung for five pieces of silver!”

The next case I mention is that of Lazarus, who was raised from the dead. Our history relates that he had been dead four days. Already had the humbling process of decomposition commenced. Jesus however, in all the majesty of his character, surrounded by the Jews, as well as by his own disciples, proceeded to the grave, and “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that had been dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face bound about with a napkin.” “And many of the Jews,” it is added, “when they had seen the things that Jesus did, believed on him.” I will make no comment whatever on this narrative. A person who should deliberately assert that there was room for deception in this case must be charitably presumed to be beyond the reach of reasoning.

It would be unpardonable to omit mentioning, in this connection, the astonishing miracle of the resurrection of Christ,—the great fact upon which the whole fabric of Christianity rests,—the foundation stone, on

which all its doctrines, and precepts, and hopes, and consolations are built. Our history relates, that after the disciples had enjoyed for a considerable period the personal presence of their Master, he was taken from them, “and by wicked hands crucified and slain.” Not long, however, could the tomb into which he was put, though a new one, and hewn out of the solid rock, hold him as a captive. The efforts of his enemies to detain him there were futile as an attempt to imprison the whirlwind. Vain was the bulky impediment at its entrance,—vain were the guards by whom that entrance was encompassed. The sepulchre was opened, and the stone rolled away, and the illustrious captive delivered, by a power in opposition to which a band of Roman soldiers, however stout hearted and strong, was but as a bulwark of feathers thrown up to prevent the encroachments of the ocean, or as a single straw held forth to catch and stay an avalanche from the Alps. On the third day, according to his predictions, he re-appeared amongst his disciples; and the question is, whether they could have been mistaken in reference to his identity? To that question, I reply most firmly in the negative. Our histories relate that the disciples saw him, and conversed with him—touched his body—put their fingers into the prints of the nails, and thrust their hands into his sides; that they ate and drank with him, and associated with him during the forty days which he continued alive after his passion.

Now whatever ground these reports may leave for the allegation that the disciples were deceivers, they allow none whatever for the charge that they were deceived. They leave no room for the intrusion of suspicion that they may have been imposed upon. With equal justice, we might suspect that we are im-

posed upon every day and hour of our lives. How do we know that the friends with whom we associate to-day are the friends with whom we lived and conversed yesterday? And how do we know that they have real substantial bodies, and are not phantoms flitting around us,—their spirits being enshrined in a covering so light and airy as to be intangible to us? The answer to these questions, and the only answer, is, that in proof of all this, we have the evidence of our senses, which no one will dispute who is not in another respect bereft of his senses. On the same ground then, precisely, rested the confidence of the disciples, that the person who appeared among them, on various occasions, after the crucifixion of their Master, was *their Master himself*,—and that he was not a spirit, but had flesh and bones like themselves. The truth is, as it has been most justly observed, that the mere fact of the death and resurrection of an individual, supposing the event actually to happen, does not render it in the slightest degree more difficult to pronounce a judgment, in reference to the identity of that person, than his absence from us during a similar period would render it. On the evening of the first day of the week, when Jesus came and stood in the midst of his disciples, they were in no degree less able to judge that it was their Master who presented himself before them, and that he appeared among them in the same body which they had so frequently witnessed before, than if his short absence had been occasioned by one of his visits to the spot where he was in the habit of pouring out his soul in prayer to God.

I have only one more observation to make for the purpose of establishing the point to which I am directing your attention, and I confess that in my mind it

sets the question completely at rest. Our history asserts that Christ not only wrought miracles himself, but conferred the power of performing them upon his disciples. When he sent them out, it is asserted that he gave them power against unclean spirits—to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesses, and all manner of diseases. “As ye go,” was his command, “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” Now admitting, for the sake of argument, that in reference to all the previously alleged miracles of Christ, the disciples may have been deceived,—admitting that they were so incredibly deluded as to mistake the legerdemain of a conjuror (for such the Saviour must have been in that case) for the unquestionably supernatural acts of cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead,—admitting all this, I say (for we can afford to make great concessions) the deception must have necessarily come to an end the instant he pretended to confer the same power upon them. The power of delusion could not have gone a step further. No man could deceive another into the belief that he can reach the stars. It would not have been more easy for Christ to persuade his disciples that they were able to heal the sick, and raise the dead. You may attribute to them as large a portion of credulity—of superstitious and enthusiastic feeling as you please; but you cannot solve the phenomenon of their faith by these means. It is only insanity that can lead a man to believe himself invested with authority to suspend and control the laws of nature, while his power is not greater than our own. And whether Matthew, and John, and Paul were mad, let the impartial, judge. We are then justified in considering one part of the

dilemma negatived. The witnesses and attestors of the Christian miracles cannot have been deceived.

Secondly.—It remains for me to show that they were not *deceivers*, or did not announce to the world what they knew to be false. And here I observe—

(*First*),—that the manner in which their testimony is given proves that the narrative which they lay before us was not a product of their own imagination, but a relation of actual facts. The simplicity, and candour, and impartiality displayed in the account they present, is a proof which comes home to our feelings that they were not deceivers.

Mark the simplicity of their narrations. In their story, says one, “there is no air of declamation and harangue, nothing that looks like artifice and design. No apologies, no encomiums, no reflections, no digressions. The facts are recounted with great simplicity; and these facts are left to speak for themselves, and their great Author.” “They lay the facts,” says another writer, “before you, at no pains to think whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it: they tell the truth, and attend to nothing else.” “There is little or no parading about their own sincerity,” says Dr. Chalmers. “We collect their pretensions to credit from the history itself; but we see no anxious display of these pretensions. We cannot fail to feel the force of that argument which is derived from the publicity of the Christian miracles; but this publicity is simply recorded by the evangelists. There is no ostentatious display of the advantages which it gives to the Christian argument. They bring their story forward in the shape of a direct and unencumbered narrative; and deliver themselves with that simplicity, and unembarrassed confidence, which

nothing but their consciousness of truth, and the perfect feeling of their own strength and consistency can account for."

Now I apprehend, that if the gospel history were a fabrication, it is utterly inconceivable that the writers would have preserved this simple style of narration. When detailing the indignities offered to his pretended master, an impostor would have employed the high-toned language of resentment and condemnation. He would have aimed to melt us into pity, for the sufferings of the innocent; and to fire us with indignation, at the injustice which inflicted them. He would never have thought of just relating the simple fact, without one word of compassion or censure.

Mark, further, the candour and impartiality of their narratives. We give the full praise which their eminent qualities deserve to the historian who relates the failings, as well as the virtues of the individual, or nation, that stands avowedly high in his regard,—whose narrative is not one continuous strain of panegyric; but contains, on the contrary, certain circumstances which are adapted to operate as a drawback upon the admiration which it would otherwise inspire. Such historians, then, are those of the New Testament. "They relate circumstances," says Dr. Doddridge, "which might have exposed their Master and themselves to contempt among prejudiced and inconsiderate men, such as they knew they must generally expect to meet with."

"*In reference to their Master,* they scrupled not to acknowledge that his country was infamous, his birth and education mean, and his life indigent; that he was most disdainfully rejected by the rulers, and accused of sabbath-breaking, blasphemy, and sedition; that he was reviled by the populace as a debauchee, and lunatic, and

a demoniac; and that, at last, by the united rage of both rulers and people, he was publicly executed, as the vilest of malefactors, with all imaginable circumstances of ignominy, scorn, and abhorrence. Nor do they scruple to own that horror and distress of mind into which he was thrown by his sufferings; though this was a circumstance at which some of the heathen took the greatest offence, as utterly unworthy so excellent and divine a person."

"*In reference to themselves*, the apostles readily confess, not only the meanness of their original employment, and the scandal of their former lives, but their prejudices, their follies, and their faults, after Christ had honoured them with so holy a calling. They acknowledge their slowness of apprehension under so excellent a teacher; their unbelief, their cowardice, their ambition, their rash zeal, and their foolish contentions." Now is it to be credited that impostors would have acted in this manner —would have thought of introducing such circumstances as these into their narrative? "If," says Paley, "their point had been to have the religion believed, whether true or false,—if they had fabricated the story *ab initio*, —in a word, if they had thought of anything but the truth of the case, as they understood and believed it, they would carefully have excluded from their history every circumstance to the disadvantage of their cause. At this distance of time, indeed, the account, as we now have it, is more credible than it would have been any other way; because this manifestation of the historians' candour is of more advantage to their testimony, than the difference of the circumstances of the case would have been to the nature of the evidence. But this is an effect which the historians could not have foreseen; and therefore the texture of their story could not have been framed with any view to its formation." Allow me just to add,

that the narrative which the historians have given us of their own foibles and faults affords most powerful evidence of the truth of that narrative. There is no one who is not fully aware that the pride of the human heart prompts us to adopt every method of concealment. May we not then be certain, that the sacred historians would not have blazoned forth their own imperfections, had not the humbling confession been extorted from them by the omnipotent power of truth?

(Secondly).—We have no evidence that the apostles possessed sufficient ability to fabricate a story so plausible, and consistent in all its parts, as to impose upon the multitudes that actually received it. I might have rendered this assertion more comprehensive, by stating that they had not power to fabricate such a system as is presented to us in the books of the New Testament,—for all, on the supposition that they were deceivers, is a fabrication. You might as easily conceive that a man could carry the Andes on his shoulders. This point, however, will be considered afterwards. I have not time to illustrate it at present. To the support of my present argument, it is enough for me to affirm, as I have done, that we have no evidence that the apostles could have forged a story so consistent and plausible as to deceive the multitudes that embraced Christianity: the history, therefore, which they give us must be a true history.

No man can doubt that it requires very superior talent to carry on with success a complicated system of deception. The difficulty of doing this is especially felt in the relation of pretended matters of fact, embracing a vast variety of occurrences. It would be next to impossible, for an impostor to have the minute details of his narrative so well studied and arranged as to prevent the slightest contradiction in his evidence, when subjected

to very strict scrutiny. And I think we may fairly pronounce it to be altogether impossible, that twelve witnesses should tell exactly the same story—a story embracing a vast number of particulars, and descending to great minutiae,—that they should tell it in every company, without the slightest essential variation in their testimony, and even when put to the test of the most rigid cross-examination,—unless they were telling the truth. In the case and circumstances supposed, it is utterly impossible that artifice should succeed. And yet, if the Christian religion be not of Divine origin, the apostles have succeeded—succeeded completely. They fabricated such a story—fabricated it *ab initio*; and they agreed so precisely, in their several accounts, that their bitterest enemies could not convict them of perjury or self-contradiction, but were subdued—many of them at least—by the power of this resistless evidence!

Now if a person, ignorant of the true state of the case, should inquire of the deist who these extraordinary adepts in forgery were, would he not, think you, on receiving the answer, as he must do, that they were a company of poor and illiterate fishermen, instantly reply, “No, my friend, that will not do; you must be joking, now?” What! twelve common men—men not greatly superior, if at all, in an intellectual point of view, to the same class of men amongst us—succeed, where learning, and talent, and genius have failed! Why that would be a greater miracle than healing the sick, and raising the dead; and the admission of it proves, that though the Christian may have more *faith*, there is no man who has more *credulity* than the infidel.

(*Thirdly*).—The apostles cannot have been impostors; because they had no temptation to forge such a story as is contained in the Gospels, and afterwards to publish it,

with a consciousness of its falsity. Men are influenced by motives in all that they do. It is the hope of gain—of one kind or another—that leads to the violation of the most tender and sacred obligations. Where there is no apparent prospect of this kind, there is no transgression. I admit the deep moral degradation of our species; but man—depraved as he is—is not *so* depraved as to utter a deliberate and infamous falsehood in the entire absence of temptation to do it. It is impossible to conceive that the first preachers of Christianity could have done it. When the infidel affirms that they were impostors, we call upon him then to state the probable motives that influenced their conduct—the prospect of gain which allured them to the perpetration of this act of diabolical wickedness. I maintain that there was none. It could not have been the hope of attaining honour and distinction in this world; for where was the quarter whence they could look for it? Their hearers were either Jews or Gentiles; and to the contempt or hatred of both, the religion they taught could not fail to expose them. To the former they declared, that the individual whom they had crucified was the Son of God, and the long expected Messiah; and that the crime which they had thus basely perpetrated would lead to the excision of the nation. A most promising method, truly, of leading the rulers of that people to bow down and worship them! To the latter their doctrine must have been, if possible, still more repulsive and distasteful; for one of its most prominent announcements was, that one who had suffered death as a common malefactor was constituted the Head of a religion destined to overturn and destroy every other! For Him, and him alone, the apostles demanded the supreme homage and obedience of their Gentile hearers. They preached an exclusive religion,—a religion which “accepted no com-

promise, which admitted no comprehension ;” which denied, without reserve, the truth of every article of heathen mythology—the existence of every object of heathen worship. They avowed their intention to be, not to add another god to the Pantheon, but to purge at once, and for ever, that Augean stable from all its abominations, by directing through it “the river of the water of life,”—requiring all to whom they addressed their message to worship, henceforth, “one God, through one Mediator, Jesus Christ.” Going forth on a mission of this kind, they must have been mad to anticipate other treatment than that which they actually experienced—a life of sorrow and a death of violence.

Did they then look forward for distinction and reward to another world? But on what could they have founded their hope of either? Reward for falsehood and forgery, for unparalleled and inconceivable baseness! Why the conscious guilt of propagating a religion, in the name of God, which they knew to be false, must have subdued and crushed all their energies; it must have clothed eternity with horrors which no human being can contemplate with composure. And how, in this case, is it conceivable that one of the awful denunciations of their religion should have been, “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone?”

(*Finally*).—The apostles cannot have been deceivers; because—to adopt the admirable statement of Paley—“we have satisfactory evidence that they voluntarily passed their lives in sufferings, and at length submitted to death itself, in attestation of the accounts they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of them.” Our own histories affirm both that Christ predicted that this would be the case, and that his predictions were accomplished in the painful experience of his disciples.

"Behold," said he, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men; for they shall deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues: yea, the time cometh, when whosoever killeth you shall think he doeth God service." With this prediction the event was in exact accordance; for "they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented." We are not, however, thrown in support of this act entirely upon the testimony of our own histories. Our enemies attest the sufferings of the primitive disciples, in attestation of the reports they delivered to the world. In proof of this, I lay before you the following statement of Tacitus, the Roman historian. Having spoken of the fire which happened at Rome in the reign of Nero, and of the suspicions which were entertained that the emperor himself was concerned in causing it, he adds, "But neither these exertions, nor his largesses to the people, nor his offerings to the gods, did away the infamous imputation under which Nero lay of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To put an end therefore to this report, he laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishment, upon a set of people who were held in abhorrence for their crimes, and called by the vulgar Christians. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again, and spread, not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome, where everything bad upon earth finds its way, and is practised. Some who confessed their sect were first seized; and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended,

who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome, but of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockeries. Some were disguised with the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs. Some were crucified, and others were wrapped in pitched shirts, and set on fire, when the day closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night.” *

Now the question is, “What could have sustained them under sufferings so dreadful, but a conviction of the goodness of the cause in which they were engaged?” I boldly answer, “Nothing.” They cannot, therefore, have been deceivers. “By simply not bearing testimony,” (I quote the words of Paley,) “they might have avoided all these sufferings, and lived quietly. Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw—assert facts which they had no knowledge of—go about lying to teach virtue—and though not only convinced of Christ’s being an impostor, but having seen the success of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying it on—and so persist as to bring upon themselves, for nothing, and with a full knowledge of the consequences, enmity and hatred, danger and death?” It cannot be conceived. The apostles were not then deceivers; and we have proved that they were not deceived. The reports which they lay before us are consequently true, *i.e.* the miracles of Christ were real miracles,—in other words, Christianity is a revelation from God; for as miracles are incontrovertible proofs of a Divine mission, and as miracles were wrought by Christ in attestation of his Divine mission, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that he was a teacher sent from God.

* *Annalium*, lib. xv., c. 44.

With a single remark of a practical nature, I conclude. As Christianity is a supernatural communication from God, it *ought* to be received, and received in that character by us. There can be no *blameless* rejection of a system of religion whose Divine origin stands on the basis of miraculous evidence. We are *bound* to believe a man of tried integrity, when his testimony relates to a matter in regard to which he is competent to give evidence. Can our obligations be less in reference to Jehovah? "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son." It becomes then all who may be doubtful and wavering to leave unemployed no means of coming to an enlightened judgment on the question, "Is Christianity from God, or not?" The consequences are too momentous to admit of delay; for if its origin be Divine, infidelity is a warfare against evidence, and against God. The risk is tremendous,—the result must be final ruin.

LECTURE VII.

PROPHECY—AN ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

The conditions on which this argument, to be valid, must rest:—prophecies concerning Christ:—prophecies uttered *by* Christ himself:—the rapid diffusion of Christianity, immediately after its first promulgation—a circumstance abundantly foretold—a phenomenon to be accounted for:—the Divinity of Christianity explains the fact nothing else can:—modern diffusion of Christianity.

THE subject of the present lecture is the support which Christianity derives from PROPHECY; and from its rapid diffusion soon after its first introduction into the world. I have stated that the nature of the support which our religion derives from these sources does not differ essentially from that which is supplied by *Miracles*; yet that it is proper, on various accounts, to consider them separately. I pass on then to the consideration of *Prophecy*, as one of the foundations on which we build our faith in the Divine origin of Christianity.

I do not deem it necessary to say anything in support of the proposition, *that the power of foretelling future events is supernatural*; it is not, I believe, when the term “foretell” is used in its strict and proper sense, denied. Nothing indeed can be more evident than that God alone

can enable any man to predict what will happen hereafter, in a case where the ordinary operations of the powers of nature cannot be within the view of his mind. And since it is impossible to conceive that he would bestow the power of doing this upon an individual who sought to delude his fellow-creatures, by offering to them as a revelation from God a system which he had himself invented, it necessarily follows that Christianity must be of Divine origin, if it has the basis of prophecy to stand upon.

Before I enter more particularly upon the subject, it will be well to remind you of the conditions which are requisite to confer validity upon the argument derived from prophecy. They are three.

1. *There must be sufficient evidence that the prophecy appealed to—I now call it prophecy for the sake of brevity—was delivered previously to the occurrence of the event, which is said to be its accomplishment.*

2. *The event or events predicted must be beyond the power of human sagacity to foresee.*

3. *The predictions themselves must receive manifestly their appropriate and complete accomplishment in the events to which they are said to refer.* In short, when an event takes place in exact accordance with an account and a description of it given, beyond all question, before it happened, and when that event is of such a nature as to have been manifestly beyond the reach of guess or conjecture, then must the previous account of it be admitted to be a prophecy; and the Divine mission of the individual who appeals to it, in proof that he was sent by God, ought at once to be acknowledged.

Now the support which Christianity derives from prophecy is of a double nature. There are prophecies which centered in Christ,—there are prophecies also which

were delivered by him; and all were most exactly accomplished.

FIRST.—There are numerous passages in the Old Testament Scriptures which predict that a divinely authorized teacher should appear in the world at a future and distant period, whose instructions all would be bound to receive. These predictions were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Christianity is therefore of Divine origin. It cannot be improper to produce this argument in support of Christianity; because it was used by Christ himself, and his disciples. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.” To the predictions to which we now refer we must look for an explanation of the well-known and undoubted fact, that about the time of the Saviour’s personal ministry, there existed a general expectation of the appearance of a great prophet and lawgiver,—an expectation which prevailed not only among the Jews, but was even diffused among the heathen nations in the vicinity of Judea. Tacitus relates that great numbers were persuaded that it had been foretold, in the ancient and sacred volumes of the priests, that at that very time the East should rise to great power, and that some from Judea should govern the world. The persons to whom Tacitus refers naturally enough apply these predictions to Vespasian and Titus; but they acknowledge at the same time that the Jews understood them differently, and applied them to a Deliverer of their own nation. The question then presents itself, What are the passages in the Old Testament Scriptures which laid the foundation of this general expectation? or, in other words, what prophecies concerning the Messiah do they contain?

There is one remark of great importance in reference to prophecy in general; the recollection of which I must beg you to carry along with you, while I refer more particularly to the predictions of which I now speak. It is, *that we must not expect any Scripture prophecies to be so clear and distinct, as to be perfectly intelligible previously to the occurrence of the events towards which they point.* Had that been the case, they must often have defeated their own purpose; it being certain, as the apostle says, that if the Jews had known that Jesus was the Messiah, they would not have crucified him. All that can in reason be expected is, that the prophets should describe circumstances which coincide in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and coincide in no other person.

Did our time permit, I would read to you a series of prophecies which foretell, in terms as definite as is compatible with the design of prophecy, the following circumstances. That the Messiah was to be a descendant of David; that he was to be the son of a virgin; that he was to be a native of Bethlehem; that he was to be a resident in Galilee; that he was to be destitute of external recommendations to public notice; that he was to pass through a life of suffering; that he was to be betrayed by a familiar friend; that he was to be proceeded against as a culprit; that he was to display consummate meekness and patience; that he was to be cut off by a violent death, yet with the forms of justice; that his apparel should be parcelled out among his executioners; that although classed among malefactors, he should be interred in a rich man's tomb; that he should rise again from the dead, without undergoing the process of corruption; and that he should leave this world, and ascend up into heaven. Many of these predicted circumstances are to be found in the fifty-third chapter of

Isaiah; and it is impossible that justice should be done to this subject without reading the whole of that chapter, together with the concluding part of the fifty-second. But time absolutely forbids this: I must therefore trust to your recollections, while I ask you, with a late excellent writer, to apply to these predictions the three *tests* which have been laid down.

It is then certain, *First*, that these prophecies were written, and given to the world, previously to the events. Our appeal is to the Jews, who still are, and ever have been, the adversaries of Christianity. They are our librarians. These prophecies are in their Bibles, as well as ours; and it is a well-authenticated fact, not only that they were extant in the original Hebrew, but also in a Greek translation long before the era of the gospel history.

Secondly.—It is not less certain that the circumstances are so complicated, so unparalleled, so far removed from the range of human conjecture, that they could not by any possibility have been foreseen even by the most sagacious of our race.

Finally.—I add; nothing can be clearer than that there is an obvious and palpable accordance between these predictions of the ancient prophets, and the record of the occurrences. I need only ask you to compare the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with the history of the events given by the evangelists; and then to say what effect is produced by observing the precise, the minute, and the multiplied coincidences between the one and the other.

There are two particular prophecies which I should illustrate at some length, were I not absolutely forbidden by a necessary regard to brevity: I can do no more than barely refer to them. The first is contained in Deut.

xviii. 18, 19. It is the language of God to Moses. “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” That Christ was the prophet intended is expressly affirmed by Peter in Acts iii. 21–23. And the whole circumstances of the case show that Peter was not mistaken. The excision of the Jews, after their rejection of the words which were brought to them by Jesus of Nazareth, was most manifestly the fulfilment of the threatening denounced against all who would not hear that prophet. The second prophecy is the one which is contained in the third chapter of Malachi; and in reference to which I can do no more than beg you to refer to it on your return home. This necessary brevity is less to be regretted, because our second division of the argument from prophecy contains more manifest, if not more conclusive proof of the Divine origin of Christianity, than the one we have just considered. I pass on therefore to observe—

SECONDLY,—that Christ delivered many prophecies himself,—that these prophecies were exactly accomplished. There can therefore be no doubt of his Divine mission.

The prophecies delivered by Christ were very considerable as to number, and of various descriptions. “They relate,” says a modern author, “either to himself, or to his apostles, or to the success of the gospel in the world, or to the Jewish polity. Concerning himself, he foretold the manner and circumstances of his death, of his resurrection and ascension, &c. ‘The Son of man,’ said he, ‘shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall

be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.' 'For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and nights in the heart of the earth.' He said unto Mary, 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.' Concerning the apostles, he foretold the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. 'Wait at Jerusalem,' said he to them, 'for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me; for ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. And ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.'" He also foretold the persecution they should endure. "They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake: and ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. Yea, the time cometh, when he that killeth you will think that he doeth God service." With respect to the gospel, he foretold—what in itself was most improbable—its rapid progress through the world; its publication to all nations, even previously to the invasion of Judea, and the destruction of Jerusalem; and its early triumphs over heathen idolatry. "And this gospel of the kingdom," said he, "shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come." His prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem will be noticed presently; in the meantime, allow me

to make a few remarks upon those we have now enumerated.

It will not be denied then, I observe, that all the events predicted by Christ did actually come to pass; nor will it be doubted that they were beyond the reach of human sagacity to foresee. The prophecies are too numerous and too diversified to be resolved into fortunate guesses, or happy conjectures, after a careful examination of the signs of the times. The only question which can be raised in regard to them is, *whether they were forged?* This I admit to be a very fair question. I know perfectly well, says the deist, that Christ is affirmed by the evangelists to have uttered these predictions; but I do not believe them. When compiling the history of his life, after the events to which these predictions refer had taken place, it was the easiest thing in the world to put these prophecies into his mouth, and doubtless zeal for the honour of their Master would lead them to do it. On this point our adversaries are inclined to boast. Like the locks upon the head of Samson, this is the part where they would seem to think their great strength lies. Let us examine the objection a little. I might refuse to notice it, on the ground that it is most unfair,—and I had almost said unprincipled, being an assumption which attributes one of the worst of crimes to the apostles, and an assumption altogether gratuitous. I might recall to your recollection the proof which was lately adduced that they cannot have been deceivers; but I will not avail myself of it. The objection may be easily repelled by other arguments.

I admit, then, that if our histories taught that Christ delivered these prophecies in the presence of his disciples only, there might be some ground for a suspicion of

forgery. But if, on the other hand, these histories either affirm, or manifestly imply, that they were delivered in the presence of his *enemies* also,—and if it be a further fact (and we have proved that it is so) that our accounts were written and made public soon after the events recorded are said to have taken place,—all suspicion of forgery must be abandoned: for the statements in our histories would have been instantly and effectually contradicted, if they had not been true; and this contradiction would have founded the system at once.

Now the fact is, that our histories put it beyond all doubt that the prophecies of our Lord—at least many of them—were delivered in the presence of his enemies. This is not however distinctly said: it is left to be gathered by inference from what is stated; and it is far more satisfactory on that very account. The fact that the prophecies of Christ were delivered in the presence of his enemies is one of so much importance (an impostor must have felt it to be so) that he would never have put it behind the door, where no one could see it, —he would have brought it prominently into view. If the New Testament had been a fabrication, we should have had distinct and repeated assertions that Christ uttered his predictions publicly—in the hearing of foes, as well as of friends; but this is not the case. We gather that fact—certainly gather it—from what is said; but we gather it incidentally,—a proof that the historians are not attempting to delude, but telling us the truth.

In proof of the foregoing assertions I refer you to the following passages. From the twelfth chapter of John, verse 31, we learn that he foretold the manner of his death in the presence of his enemies. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

"This he said," adds the historian, "signifying what manner of death he should die." His hearers also manifestly understood him in that sense; for they immediately replied, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth ever; and how sayest thou then that the Son of man shall be lifted up?" And that his hearers, on that occasion, were not all friends is clearly implied in the language of the historian in the 37th verse, where he tells us that they did not all believe on him. It is also manifest that he foretold his resurrection, as well as his death, in the presence of his enemies. "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees"—the most determined enemies of Christ—"came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." (Matt. xxvii. 62.) He also foretold the persecutions of his disciples, and the rapid diffusion of his religion, in the presence of his enemies. In a general address to the multitude and the disciples, he turned to the Pharisees, and said, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you"—*i. e.* under the present dispensation—"prophets, and wise men, and scribes,"—individuals, as though he had said, worthy of these honourable appellations; "and some of them ye shall kill and crucify." "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." This he said publicly; for it is added, in a verse or two afterwards, that he turned to his disciples, and said to them *privately*, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see."

Now I am quite aware that an infidel, who suspects everything, and who most unphilosophically as well as unjustly acts upon his suspicions, will not allow me to take it for granted that Christ really did say all this, and say it in the circumstances described; and there-

fore he will not take it for granted. I waive, for the moment, maintaining that these predictions actually fell from his lips. But I do maintain that our histories *affirm* that he uttered them, and in the circumstances described,—affirm it in the face of the world; and one of them probably affirmed it not more than ten years after the ascension of Christ. And I further maintain, that it is impossible to conceive that those who compiled them would have had the audacity to do this, if it had not been true. It is indeed easy to conceive, that if no moral principle had stood in their way, they might have intimated that such predictions, though none were delivered, were uttered in their presence, because such intimations were incapable of contradiction. But to suppose that they would have affirmed that they were uttered in the presence of some who were then alive, and so could contradict them, is to suppose them not only depraved, but impudent, and foolish, and mad beyond all parallel and all belief.

I come now to notice the most remarkable of our Lord's prophecies,—his prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. I only wish to premise that we have undoubted evidence that this prophecy was spoken, and committed to writing, long before the event predicted came to pass; and that we have an account of the event as it did actually take place, agreeing in every particular with the prophecy, from the pen of an enemy to the Christian religion: so that even our opposers themselves must acknowledge it to have been a perfectly undesigned coincidence; and it is a coincidence which constitutes a pillar of massy strength in support of the Divinity of Christianity. You will find the prophecy in Luke xxi. 5–25: “And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

As for these things which ye behold, the days shall come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" &c.

The signs that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, together with that event itself, as predicted by our Lord, were exactly fulfilled. Time will only allow me to mention a few of the corresponding circumstances. Those who wish for more information may consult Josephus's "History of the Jewish Wars," and Bishop Newton on the Prophecies.

False Christs our Lord mentions as the first sign of his coming to inflict punishment upon the Jews. And shortly after his decease, this part of his prophecy began to be fulfilled. In the eighth chapter of Acts we are told of Simon Magus, who bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that he was some great one; "to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God." Of the same stamp and character, says Bishop Newton, was Dositheus the Samaritan, who pretended that he was the Christ foretold by Moses. In the reign of Claudius arose another impostor, named Theudas, who deceived multitudes, but was at length killed, and his followers, by a troop of horse. A few years afterwards, in the reign of Nero, these impostors arose so frequently that many of them were apprehended and killed every day.

Christ foretold further, that before the destruction of the city, there should be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. Josephus, in his preface to the "History of the Jews"—of his own countrymen, informs us that a star hung over the city like a sword;

and that this comet continued for a whole year; that at the feast of unleavened bread, before the setting of the sun, there were seen over all the country chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities; and, what he reckons the most terrible of all, that one Jesus, an ordinary country fellow, four years before the war began, and when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets day and night, “A voice from the east; a voice from the west; a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the temple; a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides; a voice against all the people.” The magistrates endeavoured by stripes and torture to restrain him; but he still cried, with a mournful voice, “Woe, woe, to Jerusalem.” This he continued to do for seven years and six months together, and especially at the great festivals: and he neither grew hoarse, nor was tired; but went about the walls, and cried with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, to the city, and to the temple, and to the people;” and as he added at last, “Woe, woe, also to myself,” it happened that a stone from some sling or engine immediately struck him dead.

Our Lord further foretold, concerning the city and the temple, that there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down. A figurative expression this, says Bishop Newton, to denote an utter destruction; and the prophecy would have been amply fulfilled, if the city and temple had been utterly destroyed, though every single stone had not been overturned. But it happened, in this case, that the words were almost literally fulfilled, and scarcely one stone was left upon another. For when the Romans had taken Jerusalem, Titus ordered his soldiers to dig up

the foundation both of all the city and the temple. Titus, we are assured, was very desirous of preserving the temple; and protested to the Jews, who had fortified themselves in it, that he would preserve it even against their will. He had expressed the like desire of preserving the city too; and sent Josephus and other Jews again and again to their fellow-countrymen to persuade them to surrender. But an overruling Providence directed it otherwise. The Jews themselves first set fire to the porticoes of the temple, and then the Romans. One of the soldiers, neither waiting for any command, nor trembling for such an attempt, but urged by a certain Divine impulse, threw a burning brand in at the golden window, and thereby set fire to the buildings of the temple itself. Titus ran immediately to the temple, and commanded his soldiers to extinguish the flame. But neither exhortations nor threatenings could restrain their violence. They either would not or could not hear; and those behind encouraged those before to set fire to the temple. He was still for preserving the holy place. He commanded his soldiers even to be beaten for disobeying him; but their anger, and their hatred to the Jews, and a certain vehement fury overcame their reverence for their general, and their dread of his commands. A soldier, in the dark, set fire to the doors; and thus, as Josephus says, the temple was burnt against the will of Cæsar. And thus, we may add, the purposes of God, and the prophecies of Christ, were accomplished.*

* In addition to the account given us by Josephus, compare with the PREDICTIONS of our Lord *Tacitus's History*, Book V., sections 1–13, especially the 12th and 13th. Remembering that he despised the Jews as a nation who entertained an implacable hatred of all other people ("adversus omnes alios hostile odium"), and that he regarded their religion as a pes-

I have dwelt the longer upon this prediction of Christ, because it is of itself sufficient to establish his claims to the character of a true prophet; and since the power of predicting future events can be communicated by God alone, the possession of this power by Jesus of Nazareth is a decisive proof of the Divinity of his mission.

With the evidence arising from prophecy in support of the Divine origin of the Christian religion, I propose to couple to-night that which is furnished by the fact of the rapid and extensive diffusion of Christianity during the first three centuries.

I assert, then, that the primitive triumphs of Christianity over all opposition may be regarded, considering all the circumstances of the case, as furnishing us with most decided evidence of its truth. The fact of its rapid diffusion I must, in a great measure, take for granted; and I do this with less reluctance, because I do not know that it has ever been denied. I merely observe, however, that it is supported by the testimony of the sacred writers, as well as of contemporary historians. For the former, I refer you to the Acts of the Apostles. Some of the testimonies of such historians, who were at the same time enemies to Christianity, I proceed to lay before you.

The first is that of Tacitus, the Roman historian, in a passage which I had occasion to quote last night, though for a different purpose.* Alluding to the great fire which happened at Rome in the reign of Nero,

silent superstition ("*exitibilis supersticio*"), it is marvellous that his statements—defective and meagre, for a Roman historian of the first class, as they are—should be so corroborative of the Sacred Record! To facts and truth adversaries supply often evidence as strong as the warmest friends.

* See pp. 398, 399.

almost thirty years after the Christian era, he speaks in the following manner of the Christians. They had their denomination or name from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a time, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, but reached Rome also. At first *they* only were apprehended who confessed their sect; afterwards a vast multitude was discovered by them. Now this relation of Tacitus establishes, you will observe, the following important points:—that the gospel began to be preached at Jerusalem according to our accounts; that having spread through Judea, it at length reached Rome, and obtained there a number of converts.

The next testimony I produce is that of Pliny, the Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, who, in consequence of the number and perseverance of the Christians, found it necessary to ask advice of the emperor Trajan, whether the laws against them should be enforced. His language is as follows. “Suspending all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially considering the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many,” he adds, “of all ages, and of every rank, and of both sexes, likewise are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only; but the larger towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless, it appeared to me that it might be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims also are everywhere bought up; whereas for some time there were

none to purchase them." This epistle of Pliny was written not more than fourscore years after the crucifixion of Christ. The distance of Bithynia and Pontus from Judea was very great; and consequently Christianity must have taken a considerable time to travel thither, and to convert the nations through which it passed in its progress. But even at this distance from Jerusalem, in the short space of eighty years from the ascension of Christ, such had been its success as to lead Pliny to state that the temple of the idol gods had been well nigh deserted, and that the beasts that had been driven thither for sacrifice had found no purchasers. I will only add, concerning the fact itself, that Christianity, having thus begun her conquest, continued to win her victorious way, till, after three centuries of conquest, it sat down on the throne of the Cæsars.

It devolves upon me now to show the support which this fact renders to the proposition, *that Christianity is of Divine origin*. In entering upon this subject, it is necessary to bear in mind that the rapid and extensive diffusion of Christianity is a phenomenon to be solved—a fact to be accounted for. If the religion be as we affirm from God, we have the solution of the phenomenon in the truth of the religion,—in the evidence, the overpowering evidence, the evidence of miracles, by which its truth was evinced, and in that Divine blessing which it may be supposed would, in this case, attend the labours of its first preachers. But if this solution be rejected, we shall find it impossible to suggest any other that will account for it. We shall be left with an effect without a cause. I acknowledge, indeed, what some may be disposed to remind me of, that error, disseminated in peculiarly favourable circumstances, has sometimes acquired and retained a powerful ascendancy over the

human mind, for a considerable period of time. On examination, however; it will be found that there existed no circumstances of the kind to which I have now referred to accelerate the march of Christianity; but that, on the contrary, it is scarcely possible to conceive of any obstacle which did not lift up the head to oppose its progress.

First.—Will it be said that the success of the first preachers of Christianity can be ascribed to the nature of the doctrines taught by them? To this cause may be at least partly ascribed the success of the Mahomedan impostor. The prophet of Mecca permitted certain indulgences, which the purer faith of Christianity condemns. He seems to have acted, indeed, on the principle of laying a restraint upon his followers, where he knew from their physical temperament that they would bear it; and of giving up the reins to them, where he was well aware that restraint would have been impossible. And who of us does not know the kind of paradise he promised to the faithful?—the splendid sensual delights of which presented an irresistible lure to men who had never formed a conception of happiness, but in the gratification of appetite and passion.

Now the question is,—Was there such an adaptation in Christianity to the prejudices and passions of men in general—to the Jews and the Gentiles, to whom it was originally preached, as to account for the fact that multitudes of both renounced the religion in which their ancestors had lived and died, to embrace it? If an infidel should reply to this question in the affirmative, I would ask him how it comes to pass then that these considerations have not led him to embrace Christianity? How can he suppose that a system, which to him is destitute of form and comeliness, should appear so irresistibly

attractive to those Jews and Gentiles to whom it was in the first instance exhibited? Without in the slightest degree compromising the surpassing excellence of the Christian system—its adaptation to the wants of men—its power to raise them to the highest elevations of virtue and of happiness,—it would not be difficult to show, from its complexion and character, that it must be distasteful to the human race generally, when it first meets them with its exclusive claims to their faith and obedience. It is the peculiarity of Christianity, that it exalts man by previously abasing him; and this is a process which he does not understand, and I may add greatly abhors. It is not necessary to go into this general discussion. It is enough, for our present purpose, to show that it did not owe its success to its adaptation to the prejudices of those to whom it was originally addressed; for they are the men whose previous views and habits of thought and feeling should be especially considered in the inquiry upon which we have now entered. They were Jews and Gentiles. "Now as addressed to the Jews," says Paley, "Christianity was a system adverse to those opinions upon which their hopes, their partialities, their pride, their consolation was founded. They had worked themselves up to the persuasion that a singularly advantageous and exclusive change was to be effected in the condition of their country, by the agency of a long promised messenger from heaven. They clung to this hope under every misfortune of their country, and with more tenacity as their dangers and calamities increased. To find then that expectations so gratifying were to be more than disappointed—that they were to end in a mild unambitious religion, which, instead of victories and triumphs, instead of exalting their nation and constitution above the rest of the world, was to advance those

whom they despised to an equality with themselves, on those very points of comparison on which they most valued their own distinction, could be no very pleasing discovery to a Jewish mind. It was a doctrine equally harsh and novel, and which the pride of their hearts would lead them to reject."

To the argument of Paley, it may be added that the abrogation of the ceremonial part of the law of Moses by Christianity must have rendered it most repulsive to the Jews. Never did any body of men more completely identify religion with external observances—or rather make the latter a succedaneum for the former—than they. Neglecting judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, they yet thought well of themselves, and of their state; because they were careful not to neglect the payment of tithes, mint, anise, and cummin. This ground of confidence Christianity swept entirely from under them. It virtually abolished the whole of the Levitical code. It struck at the root of their pride and their hopes; and threw them for acceptance with God upon a foundation most abhorrent to all their prejudices and their feelings. "He that believeth on the Son," said Jesus, "hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

And if these considerations must have rendered Christianity so distasteful to the Jews, there were others which would at any rate prevent its being more attractive to the Gentiles. On this point, it should never be forgotten that it was an exclusive religion. It denied, without reserve, the truth of every article of heathen mythology—the existence of every object of heathen worship. It accepted no compromise; it admitted no comprehension. It must prevail, if it prevailed at all, by the overthrow of every temple and statue and altar

which stood in its way. It held not the ordinary tone and style of heathenism,—a tone of ruinous candour and liberality, springing from the false and destructive tenets of polytheism. Its original apostles did not say to others, “We venture not to impugn your religion, but upon the whole we recommend ours as better.” They were not merely the setters forth of a new God. Had that been the case, they might perhaps, as it has been said, have obtained for him a place in the Pantheon,—that would have been no more than in Popish countries adding another saint to the calendar; but their avowed design was to overthrow the Pantheon itself, and to bury all the abominations within it in its ruins. They preached one Lord, one faith, one baptism; so that their doctrine, instead of meeting with allies in the prejudices and passions of their hearers, had to encounter in them a legion of enemies—of enemies who never ceased, except in those cases where opposition was vanquished by the omnipotent power of truth,—never ceased, I say, to cry out for vengeance against them, until their persecutors were satiated with their blood.

There was nothing then in the nature of the Christian religion itself to account for the fact of its rapid diffusion. Every one who admits the truth of the preceding statements will at once acknowledge this.

Secondly.—Can it be said that the success of the first preachers of Christianity is to be ascribed to favour shown to them by men of rank and political influence and authority, in those countries which constituted the scene of their labours? If in point of fact they had enjoyed the smiles and sanction of the wealthy and the great, that circumstance would I acknowledge have operated most powerfully,—not indeed in converting any to the faith of the religion they taught, for men are not

made Christians by influence or courtesy,—but in inducing numbers to profess the faith of it, and to enrol themselves among the number of the disciples. In all countries we may expect to find many whose religion is not the result of conviction—who put it on as a garment, and who of course will wear that which is the most fashionable, whatever it may happen to be,—men who float in the stream of popular, and especially of courtly opinion, and who will accordingly assume the appearance of extraordinary sanctity and devotion, or manifest what is thought to be a decent and becoming regard to religion, or openly disavow all pretensions to it, as may best suit the temper of the times in which they live. Now if Christianity, on its first publication, had thus obtained influential and royal patronage, it would not have been difficult to account for its extensive and rapid diffusion, without supposing its truth, or that miracles were wrought to evince that truth, or that the power of God was exerted in the affair in any way at all. Multitudes, whose judgments were unconvinced, and whose hearts were untouched by the evidence and the beauty and the glory of the religion itself, would have crowded to do it false homage, and thus added to the numbers of its train. But was this the case? No; the exact reverse. During the first three centuries, the strong arm of all the governments in the world—of all at least under which the religion of Christ began to take root—was raised to crush and destroy it. There was scarcely a single stratagem to which they did not resort—a single implement of torture which they did not employ to force the first converts to abjure it. Calumny poured forth its torrents of abuse; for the new sect was everywhere spoken against. The characters of the primitive disciples were aspersed,—their goods seized and confiscated,

—their persons apprehended; and having suffered a mock trial, or in more cases not having suffered any trial at all, they were driven as sheep to the slaughter. They had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. “They were stoned; they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.” The spirit of inspiration adds, “The world was not worthy of them.”

These general assertions might be most abundantly verified by an appeal to specific facts. It is admitted, on all hands, that the chief priests and rulers among the Jews were amongst the most exasperated of the enemies of Christ. I do not affirm at present that their enmity was unfounded: I merely state the circumstance as a matter of fact. At length they determined upon his destruction, and carried into execution their purposes of vengeance by crucifying him between two thieves. The followers of a leader thus put to death, as an impostor, could expect nothing but persecution from the Jews. The Acts of the Apostles accordingly contains an account of the sufferings they endured. Nor were they persecuted by their own countrymen merely. Laws against them were enacted by Nero, Domitian, and others of the Roman emperors. During the reign of the former two, they endured the most horrible cruelties. By the first they were accused, as we have seen, of having set fire to the city of Rome, that he might have an ostensible reason for reeking his vengeance upon them. He wrapped some of them in combustible garments, and ordered fire to be set to them when the darkness commenced, that thus like torches they might dispel the gloom of the night. Others were fastened to crosses, or torn to pieces

by wild beasts, or put to death in some such dreadful manner; and it was not till this incarnation of cruelty and of crime was called to his account that this persecution terminated,—a persecution which had continued four years, during which time the Christians suffered every sort of torture which the ingenious cruelty of their enemies could devise.

Well, and what was the result of all this? Was the new religion, in this its state of weakness, able to bear up against this tempest of opposition? Does not its situation remind you of the condition and peril of an infant which is thrown between the feet of an enraged elephant? Who does not tremble for its safety? How could it escape being crushed to death? I maintain that no one can answer this question who does not acknowledge with us that, coming from God, it was more than a giant in its very infancy,—that its truth, and the miraculous evidence by which its truth was sustained, and the power and blessing of God accompanying its publication, gave to it a principle of life which the massy feet and bulk of the infuriated animal could not extinguish. Shall I be told that advantage has been sometimes given to a bad cause by persecution? I answer, with a late writer, that for a cause to be really and ultimately benefited by persecution, it must be a good one. Persecution may indeed give an ephemeral advantage even to error and fanaticism, by transferring sympathy to the sufferer, and by fixing a wavering mind in its creed; and the progress of truth may sometimes be checked for a period by its influence. But this is all that it can do, either to serve a bad cause, or to impede a good one. Error, too feeble to meet the continued trial, will be overlaid by the rigid hand of opposition, and stifled, or crushed; while truth, gathering elasticity

from resistance, and vigour from conflict, will be trained, by this painful discipline, for easy and final conquest.

It would be difficult to point to a speech more strikingly characterized by truth, and sound political wisdom, than the address of Gamaliel to the council in reference to the apostles. “Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.” Well would it have been for the cause of our adversaries, if they had acted permanently on this advice. They would have deprived us thereby of the splendid argument, in support of the Divine origin of the religion they opposed, derived from its triumph over all opposition. But they were too shortsighted and too much irritated to do this. They did not refrain from these men,—they did not let them alone. And the result of their opposing efforts shows that the religion was of God; for they could not overthrow it. Nay, they were in the mortifying condition of men who advance the cause they design to oppose, and by the very means they adopt to subvert and crush it. The fire which the Spirit of the living God had kindled in the hearts of the disciples was not to be extinguished by any efforts of theirs,—it only burnt the more brightly and steadily for their attempts to overcome it. The tree of life thus happily planted in our world, so far from being torn up by the blasts of persecution, only struck its roots more firmly and deeply into the soil, and scattered its fragrance and its fruit far and wide. And when the lives of the primitive Christians were taken to stop the progress of the religion, it was of no avail. The blood of the martyrs was then, as it ever has been, the seed of the church. One army of confessors after another sprang out of the dust of their predecessors,

like the fabled phœnix from the ashes of its parent, till at length, convinced that opposition was worse than fruitless, the adversaries of Christianity allowed it to proceed without further molestation, and in three centuries after the crucifixion of its Founder was it invited to make imperial Rome its sanctuary!

There was nothing then in the fate of Christianity, if I may use that word, to account for its rapid diffusion.

Thirdly.—Will it be said then, as the last resort, that the talents, and genius, and learning of the men who were constituted by Christ the original apostles of the religion, account, on the supposition that it is a fabrication, for its rapid progress? It is readily admitted that the qualifications to which I have now referred, in connection with a conciliatory mode of address, will possess considerable influence in recommending a doctrine which is neither true in itself, nor attractive in its appearance and character. But did the first preachers of Christianity possess these auxiliaries? Were they celebrated for power of intellect, for splendour of imagination, for beauty of diction, the extent of their resources—for the polish and grace of their demeanour? What evidence can be produced that this was the case? None at all. All the evidence goes to support the contrary opinion. They were unlearned and ignorant men, even by the confession of their adversaries themselves; and I should be unpardonable, were I not to state that such instruments were employed that their success might appear with more striking manifestation to be of God, and that the glory of it might be given to him. Splendid instrumentality has an especial tendency to conceal the hand and power that employs it; and hence God did not choose wise men after the flesh to call the

world to the knowledge and faith of Christ,—for so the passage to which I refer should be rendered. But he chose “the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.”

The selection of this kind of agents does not derogate from the wisdom of God,—because he does not need, as we do, to employ the most appropriate and efficient instrumentality to accomplish his purposes; and therefore when it is desirable that his hand and energy, in the accomplishment of a certain work, should be more than ordinarily visible, he can make use of means between which, and the splendid result which they secure, there is so manifest a disproportion that we are compelled to exclaim with the magicians of old, “This is the finger of God.” This was the case in the establishment of Christianity in the world. Who were the agents employed in this great work? We call them “apostles;” and the word has to us contracted a sacredness and a dignity which veil from our view the meanness and obscurity of their outward state. But we should never forget that the apostles were originally fishermen; and that it is perfectly gratuitous to suppose that those who pursue that calling in the present day are in any respect inferior to them, when summoned from their primary employment by Christ. How then can we conceive that persons so miserably equipped for the work—so completely unfurnished with human means—friendless and penniless—unacquainted with any language but their mother tongue—of which they spoke only a provincial and barbarous dialect,—that persons of such character,

and in such circumstances, should have entertained for a moment the wild project of inventing a new religion, and of setting out to convert all nations to the faith of it? And how yet more impossible is it to conceive that such persons, preaching such a doctrine, and encountering such an opposition, should have succeeded in subverting Judaism and Paganism by any merely natural means, and more especially by such means only as they had it in their power to employ? Why you might as well tell me that a man could overturn yonder cathedral with a straw! There is no satisfactory solution of the phenomenon, save that which is supplied by an admission of the Divine origin of the whole, and the concurrence of Him who calleth the things which are not as though they were, who can destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nought the understanding of the prudent.

If it should be objected against these general statements that the most laborious and successful missionary was a man of letters, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in all the learning of the Jews,—I would reply, that the learning of Paul consisted in his knowledge of the Scriptures, and the Rabbinical doctrines of the Pharisees; and that, of what use soever this learning might have been to him in a mission to the Jews, to whom he was not sent, it manifestly could be of no service at all to him among the Greeks and Romans, to whom he was sent, for they despised it, and, with Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, contemptuously styled it “questions of words and names, and of their law.” I would further reply, that if it were in any degree uncertain whether Paul possessed what we call learning and eloquence, or not, we are at any rate sure that they were not employed by him in preaching the gospel. “And I,

brethren," said he to the Corinthians, "came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom; and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." And his own testimony is confirmed by that of his enemies; for "his bodily presence," said they, "is weak, and his speech contemptible."

Collect then all that has been said at this time together. The first preachers of Christianity were utterly destitute of all the qualifications which we might have deemed essential to the success of their mission,—the system they taught was most decidedly at variance with the long cherished prejudices, and passions, and hopes of their hearers,—every possible barrier was thrown up by their powerful adversaries to oppose their progress,—the fiend of persecution was turned loose upon them; and yet they succeeded in their efforts—succeeded in the most wonderful and unheard-of manner. The doctrine which they taught effected the most astonishing triumphs over the darkness and superstition and misery of the world. It shook the temple of idolatry to its very foundation. It went steadily forwards from one victory to another; and at length vanquished—by what was, on its part, a bloodless conflict—vanquished by a mode of warfare as singular as the religion which led to the struggle—vanquished not by resistance, but by submission—by unresisting submission to its insults and cruelties—vanquished even persecution itself.

The rapid diffusion of Christianity proves then its Divine origin. On the supposition of its being a fabrication, that diffusion is an effect without a cause. No man would have joined a sect which was everywhere

spoken against, and everywhere persecuted, without the full conviction of his judgment that the religion which that sect professed was true, and therefore of Divine origin,—for that was the origin they claimed for it. There must then have been some stable foundation for that confidence to rest upon. It is ineffably absurd, to suppose that the unsupported assertion of one or two, or a dozen, or a hundred fishermen, that they were teachers sent from God, would have led their hearers to abandon the religion of their fathers, and to embrace such a system as that of Christianity,—a system which was at variance with their prevailing and most powerfully-cherished propensities, and opposed by every power in existence. They would require proof of these assertions; and the fact of their conversion—a fact which cannot be denied—furnishes most conclusive evidence that the apostles had that proof to produce, viz. the power of working miracles, which their Master had conferred upon them. Admit the Divinity of Christianity, and the phenomenon is solved. Deny it; and it remains unexplained, and as I believe inexplicable.

I will venture to add, in conclusion, that the existence and extensive diffusion of the gospel in the present day manifests, as well as its primitive triumphs, the Divinity of its origin. The enemies of Christianity, as we have seen, have not let it alone; yet has it not come to nought. On the contrary, though, like our nightly luminary, it has experienced a variety of changes,—though it has sometimes waxed and sometimes waned,—at one time pouring upon us all its soft and gentle radiance, and now retiring behind an intervening cloud; yet has it never altogether withdrawn its beams. Its light is still dispelling our darkness, cheering our despondency, and guiding our feet into the paths of peace.

Nor is our spiritual luminary at present in the wane. It is rising higher in the spiritual hemisphere, and pouring more of its splendour over the world. India and Persia and Arabia and Burmah and China, as well as other parts of our globe long involved in darkness, now enjoy the dawn of its day. From the top of Mount Caucasus, in the interior of Asia, it is now shedding its beams all over the East. Its light has penetrated as far as Greenland and Labrador, and Austral Asia, and the great continent of Africa; and while North America has long rejoiced in its day, the islands of the Southern Ocean are now made glad by its meridian splendour. And it is our confident and delightful anticipation that, never setting, never remaining stationary, it will proceed in an untiring course, till it has visited all nations, and rendered this dark and miserable world almost as bright, and almost as blessed, as that land on high to which it is at once a guide and a light!

LECTURE VIII.

THE SEALING AND EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.*

2 COR. i. 22.

“Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

THE passage of Scripture I have just read sufficiently announces the subject of the lecture to which your attention is to be directed this evening—THE SEALING AND EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.

The gospel professes to bring near to man a righteousness which is sufficient for the justification of all who receive it; and to every one who is in possession of the

* [The occasion on which this lecture was delivered to a public audience, in the city of Exeter, was neither *quite ordinary* nor yet *quite extraordinary*, but one which occupied a middle position. The pastors of the various orthodox churches in that city seem to have arranged a series of important subjects bearing on the prosperity of their flocks, and the success of their work; and to Dr. Payne they assigned the topic discussed in this lecture. As the three preceding lectures exhibit his *wisdom*, his *words* and his *power*, when brought into contact with men of every creed or no creed; so does this show his *manner*, his *faithfulness* and *solicitude*, when addressing the churches of the SAINTS. The same remark applies with deeper emphasis to the MISSIONARY SERMON that succeeds it.]

blessing, it exhibits the prospect of unclouded and endless glory in the world to come. How important then is it to us to know that the testimony of the gospel is true,—that the atonement of Christ does indeed possess infinite efficacy,—and that those who believe in him shall have everlasting life! The verses immediately preceding the text are adapted to sustain our confidence in the gospel testimony. “I have delivered,” says the apostle in substance, “one unwavering statement in reference to the way of salvation. In this respect, my preaching has exactly coincided with the great subject of my ministry; for all the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in him Amen.” No shade of doubt rests upon the truth of the gospel. Its testimony is the testimony of God, who cannot lie. Its promises are the promises of that Being of whose words not one has been known to fail of its accomplishment. And yet so depraved is the human heart that Divine influence is needed to bring us to the faith of the gospel. Hence the apostle says, in the twenty-first verse, “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God:” for by this anointing we are, I apprehend, to understand that influence of the Holy Spirit by which we attain to all spiritual knowledge—knowledge of the things of the Spirit of God. It is more fully described by the apostle John in his First Epistle (chap. ii. 20). Having alluded to some who went out from them, and thereby rendered it manifest that they were not of them, the apostle addresses those to whom he wrote, “But ye have an unction (*anointing**) from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” And he proceeds, in the twenty-seventh verse, to represent it as an effectual guard against the seductions of false teachers,—“But the *anointing** which ye have received of him

* *χρισμα.*

abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

The work of the Holy Spirit is not however confined to the illumination of the understanding, and the confirmation of believers in the knowledge and faith of the gospel. This Divine Agent has other offices to perform; some of which are described in the text, and which we now proceed to consider. "He hath sealed us," says the apostle, speaking of believers exclusively, "and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The future remarks will relate to the *nature* and the *value* of the blessings referred to in the text.

FIRST.—I would call your attention to the *nature of the blessings* which the words I have read place before our view. They are two,—the sealing, and the earnest of the Spirit. We must consider them separately.

First.—Let us notice the *sealing* of which the text speaks. "God," says the apostle, "hath sealed us." There is a manifest allusion here to the common practice of affixing a mark with a seal, upon various substances, to secure some certain end which he who uses the seal may wish to accomplish thereby. The seal, applied to some soft yielding body, leaves an impression of itself upon it. "God," says the apostle, "has sealed us;" *i. e.* he has set his mark upon us. It will be necessary then to examine here this mark or impression,—the instrument which is employed in producing it, and the agent by whom it is applied.

The mark or impression itself is his own image—his moral image,—that image which was borne by man in Paradise, and lost by his apostacy,—that spiritual light and holiness which, like the sun upon the mountain ridge,

sat like a diadem of glory upon the head of the parent of our race, but which suffered a total eclipse by his transgression; for after Adam had lived 120 years, he begat a son, in his own image, after his own likeness. And as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, even the chosen to salvation themselves remain in a state of moral resemblance to their fallen head, until they are born again by the incorruptible seed of the word. Then God seals them. He impresses his own image upon them; for they are said to be *renewed* “after the image of him who created” them,—that they “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

From the passages which I have just quoted, it appears that spiritual knowledge and moral purity constitute that mark which God sets upon his people, when he renews them after his own image,—a circumstance which will appear perfectly natural to those who remember that God himself is light and holiness.

Spiritual knowledge then constitutes an essential part of that sealing to which the text refers—of that mark or impression by which the people of God are distinguished from the men of the world. They are renewed in knowledge. It is of great importance, however, to observe the specific character of this knowledge, because there is a general acquaintance with Divine truth which is often possessed apart from the existence of real religion. We should never forget that there is a knowledge of the things of the Spirit of God, to which many natural men can and do attain, as well as a higher species of knowledge, to which they have no pretensions, and seldom make any. No man, for instance, is at any loss to understand what we mean when we tell him that he has broken the Divine law—has consequently exposed him-

self to its curse, whose descent he can do nothing to avert; that if he obtain deliverance, it cannot be on the ground of any works of righteousness on his part, but by an act of sovereign mercy on the part of God, through the mediation of Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. All this is readily enough understood by the most depraved minds,—whether they believe it is a totally different thing; and in proportion as the statements are understood, the doctrine which they unfold is and must be hated by such minds. This knowledge then of the meaning of the propositions involved in the gospel testimony does not constitute the sealing of the Spirit—the mark by which God distinguishes his people from others. It is by a higher species of knowledge that they are to be recognised,—a species which we have designated by the term *spiritual*; or, in other words, a discernment not only of the truth of the gospel testimony, but of its unrivalled excellence and infinite worth. It is a discovery of the paramount importance and supreme glory of the things of the Spirit of God; partaking more perhaps of a sense of heart than a bare perception of the intellect. An unconverted, or, in the scriptural phraseology, a natural man, has no knowledge of this kind at all. He has no feeling of the excellence of Divine things. Like an individual who is devoid of taste for the charms of nature—to whom the dark blue waters of the lake, reposing with unruffled placidity in the bosom of mountains, adorned to their very summits with the full foliage, and the deep and variegated colours of the autumnal season, would have no more enchantment, no more loveliness than a field of thistles or a desert of sand—is the man who has not been born again by the Spirit of God. He looks at the Divine excellence of the person and work of Christ;

but there is no beauty in either to him. He beholds the things of the Spirit of God; but they have no charm and attraction or glory to him. His heart is dead, totally dead, to their unrivalled loveliness, their ineffable glory.

You have not then, my hearers, sufficient evidence that you have received that sealing of which the text speaks merely because you understand, in the sense already explained, the meaning of the propositions contained in the gospel, or because you may be able to give a correct verbal account of the way of salvation. The all-important question on which depends your state before God is,—Do you see the truth, the importance, the glory of the testimony of God concerning his Son? The question is not, Can you explain to others the plan of salvation; but, Does the excellence of this plan appear to you so transcendently great as to eclipse by its Divine brightness all created glories, and so great as practically to cast a veil of darkness over the effulgence of the firmament itself? The question is not, Do you perceive that sin is a violation of the Divine law? but, Do you see and acknowledge its infinite enormity on that account? It is not, Do you comprehend the Divine testimony that you are sinners? but, Do you perceive your awful guilt on that account,—that you are unworthy of the least of all God's mercies,—and that he would act with perfect justice were he to adjudge you to everlasting destruction? The question is not, Do you understand the terms in the declaration, "The Saviour is the chief among ten thousand,"—yea, "the altogether lovely?" but, Have you such a spiritual discovery of the glories of his character and work that you are ready to say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee?" The question

is not, Do you know from testimony merely—whether human or divine—that the blessings of the gospel surpass in value the whole of the material universe? but, Have you that spiritual perception—that sense of heart of their infinite worth—that once assured of your interest in them you could let earth roll under you, “nor feel the idle whirl?”

It is this discovery of the unrivalled excellence and glory of the things of the Spirit of God which, in point of knowledge, constitutes the main result of that power which is put forth in our new creation. There is, generally at least, much imparted also which belongs merely to the intellect; but the chief communication is a sense of the sweetness and preciousness of Divine things,—a spiritual perception of their value and glory. And it is in this perception that we have the characteristic difference which exists between the people of God and the men of the world. This, in regard to knowledge, is the mark which God puts upon his chosen, when he seals them by the power of his Spirit.

The image of God consists, however, not merely in knowledge, but in righteousness and true holiness; and therefore we observe further, that *moral purity* constitutes another essential part of that sealing to which the text refers. “God,” we are assured, “is light, and in him is no darkness at all”—no darkness of ignorance or of moral pollution. His understanding takes a just view of all the objects it contemplates; and his complacent regards rest upon those, and those alone, which resemble him in the holiness of his own immaculate nature, and in a degree exactly proportioned to their conformity to it. Now the apostle assures us, that the new man which believers have put on is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. Since it is given to them to

know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—to perceive the importance and excellence and glory of Divine things, their minds are naturally and necessarily suitably affected towards them. A flame of holy love is kindled in their bosoms; and whereas formerly they were ready to wonder that spiritual things and spiritual engagements should present a single point of attraction to any human being, they are now—in their best moments at least—amazed at themselves that they should have a heart for anything else. Sin has been unveiled to them in its true colours; and hence they hate it. That law of which it is the transgression has been proved to their satisfaction to be a transcript of the Divine perfections; and hence their language is, “Oh how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” A just view of their own characters has been imparted to them by the Spirit of God; and hence they abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes. A full disclosure of the glories of the person and work of Christ has been made to them; and hence in him they “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

The mark then which God sets upon his people, when he seals them by the power of his Spirit, is the mark of moral purity. It consists of two parts,—piety towards God, and justice towards man; for we are said to be created in righteousness and true holiness. The latter of these terms indicates those devout and spiritual affections which it becomes such beings as we are to cherish and to display towards God; and the former, that brotherly kindness and unbending integrity which we are bound to exercise towards man. Has God then, my hearers, set this mark upon you—the mark of moral purity? Have you been made to hate sin, as that abominable thing which God’s soul hateth? Have you

ceased to love the world, and the things of the world? and is the love of the Father in you? Are the character, person, and work of the Saviour surrounded in your apprehension with matchless glories? and are your supreme affections given to him? Does the grace of God teach you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously and godly in the present evil world? "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise," do you think of these things? This is the way in which God seals his people. This is the mark which he sets upon them—the image of his moral purity. If you know not God, and love not God,—if you have not a spiritual perception of the excellence and glory of the things of the Spirit of God,—if they are not the objects of your habitual contemplation and your intense desire, you are not a subject of that sealing of which the text speaks. In vain will any of you pretend that God has given to you a direct revelation that you are his children; for he gives such revelations to no man. They may come from the devil, to delude and destroy; but they never proceed from God. In vain will you pretend that certain passages of Scripture, announcing the pardon of sin, have been so powerfully applied to your minds that you cannot doubt their truth in application to yourselves. In vain will you appeal to any evidences of your adoption into the family of God, if this evidence be wanting—if God have not set the mark of moral purity upon you—if you have not been renewed in righteousness and true holiness. I know well that a different doctrine is abroad in the world, and has been imported into the church too; and therefore it becomes necessary to lift the voice of direct opposition to it. I know well that there are men—and men

who assume to be religious—who laugh to scorn the notion that the believer undergoes in this world any real personal sanctification, transforming him into the Divine image (*i. e. professedly* religious men laugh at real religion); but I know, at the same time, that imputed sanctification—if there could be such a thing—though the words are as void of meaning as the phrase “imputed happiness,” or “imputed salvation”—will in no degree prepare a man for holy duties, and holy society, a holy God, and a holy heaven. “It were indeed,” said a celebrated American divine, in terms almost offensively strong, and yet involving so solemn and important a truth that it is worthy of repetition,—“it were double damnation for a sinner to be sent to heaven.” Ye must then be born again. The sealing of the text is, then, the impressing of the Divine image upon the soul of man.

We pass on to point out the *instrument* or *seal* which is employed in producing it. This is stated by the apostle to be the gospel; and the following most beautiful illustration of this important fact occurs in the sixth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and the seventeenth verse. “But God be thanked, that (although) ye were the servants of sin, yet ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you,”—or, as the passage might be rendered, “into which ye were delivered.” The Greek term *τύπος*, rendered “form” here, means a model to the likeness of which other things are made to conform. The allusion in the passage is to a mould into which liquid metals are cast, that they may receive any impression which the workman wishes them to receive. The gospel is this mould,—a mould on which the image of God is inscribed. Believers are cast into this mould; and thus are the

Divine lineaments impressed upon them. In other words, their entire characters are reformed and modelled by the gospel of Christ. The perceptions of their understandings, and the feelings of their natures, are brought under its influence. The Spirit of the living God touches their hearts by his holy sovereign influence. The truth which is unfolded in the volume of Divine revelation, entering their minds, and spreading its heavenly radiance there, brings every feeling and every thought into obedience to Christ.

Such then is the seal of which the apostle speaks. A seal however, as you are well aware, needs to be applied. It must be brought into contact with the yielding substance, and pressed down upon it, or there will be no impression. And this leads to a further observation, viz., that the agent who applies the instrument or seal of which we have been just speaking is God the Holy Spirit. In other words, the success of the gospel in enlightening the dark understandings, and in sanctifying the depraved hearts of men, is to be ascribed to the omnipotent energy of the third person of the adorable Trinity. Divine truth must manifestly be brought into contact with our minds, before it can exert upon them its proper influence. Till the meaning and evidence, the nature, importance, and glory of the gospel are spiritually discerned, it is evident that it must remain to us, in reference to any effect produced by it upon us, as if it had never been proclaimed to the world. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to impart this spiritual discernment. He opens the eyes of the understanding to perceive its import—its truth and matchless glory. He produces that holy taste by which the excellence of the things of the Spirit of God are discerned and relished. Hence the apostle says that “God, who com-

manded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Secondly.—We pass on to notice the *earnest* of which the text speaks. "God hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." By this latter phrase, "the earnest of the Spirit," we are not to understand, I apprehend, the earnest given by the Spirit, *i. e.* the gifts or communications of the Spirit; but the Spirit itself, as the earnest, which is frequently represented as the sum of all the blessings promised in the gospel. The great promise of the Old Testament dispensation, when the showers of heavenly influence were almost confined to the land of Judea, was that in the last days God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. And it is remarkable that when our Lord was about to leave his disciples, and return to the Father, he not merely declared that his departure was essential to the accomplishment of this promise, but he represented the bestowment of the gift as being more than a compensation for the loss of his bodily presence. So mistaken are those in the present day who, though the Spirit remains to bless the church, tell us that no good is to be done in the world till the bodily presence of the Saviour is restored to us again. A short time previous to his decease, he commanded his disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until the crowning gift of the gospel dispensation should be imparted. The disciples obeyed the command; and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, the Spirit descended with visible tokens of his presence and power, to be a permanent guest in the world, and to take up his abode in the hearts of believers, in harmony with the Saviour's promise, for ever. Not indeed to indicate that presence by the communica-

tion of miraculous gifts,—they were only necessary for a season, and to answer purposes which were very speedily accomplished,—but to enlighten the understandings and to sanctify the affections of his people—to confirm them in the knowledge and faith of his gospel, till the work of salvation shall have been fully accomplished, and the last stone laid upon the building of mercy with shoutings of “Grace, grace unto it!” Hence it is said of believers in general that they are the temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in them. Hence also the apostle Paul assured the disciples at Rome that they were not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,—“if so be,” he adds, “that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,” *i. e.* dwelling in him, “he is none of his.”

The blessing then of which the text speaks is the Spirit himself given to dwell permanently in the people of God. Hence the apostle says, “God has given us the earnest of the Spirit *in our hearts*,”—an expression on which I would submit the following observations.

(*First.*)—We learn from it that by “the earnest of the Spirit” we are not to understand the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, with which it has sometimes been confounded; for the power of speaking with tongues—of prophesying—of healing the sick, and raising the dead, can scarcely be said to have been in the hearts of those who possessed it. Or if this argument should not remove all uncertainty in reference to the meaning of the phrase, the parallel passage in Ephesians (chap. i. 13, 14) must put it beyond all doubt; for in that passage the sealing which the Ephesian believers are said to have received, “after they believed,” or having believed,—*i. e.* “when they believed,” as the passage might be rendered,—is called “the earnest of their inheritance until the re-

demption of the purchased possession;" *i. e.* it was, in other words, the pledge of future glory. But the possession of supernatural gifts was to no one the pledge of future glory. "Many will say unto me," said our Lord, "in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful things? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

(Secondly.)—I observe upon the expression, "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts," that it obviously intends more than the indwelling of the truth of God in the minds of believers. I am far from supposing, indeed, that Divine truth does not dwell in believers, or not work effectually in them, by governing the habitual exercises of their affections, and constraining them to devote themselves to God. It is not to be doubted that, when the veil of darkness and unbelief is removed, the gospel enters their minds, and becomes a principle of powerful operation; and that it continues to exert a powerful and benign influence over every part of their characters, as long as they maintain a spiritual and believing view of it. But the question is,—By what influence do we originally obtain this view, and how are we enabled to retain it? I answer, by the agency and continued operation of the Holy Spirit. He opens the eyes of our understandings, in the first instance, to a discovery of the glory of spiritual things; and he prevents a relapse into our original darkness. He keeps alive those holy principles which were implanted by his influence, and to the sustentation of which his continued and powerful operation is necessary. And the Spirit takes up his abode in the hearts of his people, that we may rejoice in the confidence that the life of the soul

will never be permitted to expire, while its source is ever present, and is ever exerting his sustaining energy. “The earnest of the Spirit,” or the Spirit as the earnest, is thus to be distinguished from the spiritual life itself, as the cause is to be distinguished from the effect; yet as his actual presence in the heart can only be ascertained by the effects which result from his influence, I observe—

(*Thirdly*),—that, on this account, the sealing of the Spirit may be practically regarded as though it were identical with the earnest of the Spirit; for all spiritual light in the understanding, and all holy affections in the heart, must be ascribed to his agency. He applies the seal of which we were lately speaking. He brings the gospel into contact with the minds of men; he opens the eyes of their understandings to discern its excellence, its importance and glory: and the new character, or new man, which is formed through the instrumentality of Divine truth, acknowledging him as the ultimate cause of its existence, may be regarded as “the earnest of our inheritance till the redemption of the purchased possession.”

SECONDLY.—I proceed to call your attention to the *value of the blessings* referred to in the text, as that value is indicated by the end or design of their communication. “God hath sealed us;” and that proves that we are his people and property. He hath “given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;” and that is our security that we shall finally enjoy that glory which is in reserve for his people in the world above.

First.—“God hath sealed us;” and that proves that we are his people and property. Seals were anciently used for marking goods, as the property of the person who affixed his seal to them; thereby to distinguish

them from all others. Believers are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise which is to abide with the church for ever; and by this operation they are distinguished from the children of the wicked one, and are marked out as the especial property and treasure of Jehovah. In this sense the word is used in other parts of the sacred volume. Ezekiel tells us that, in the visions which he saw, the Lord called to the man who had the writer's inkhorn by his side, and said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark (or seal) upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof." (Ezek. ix. 4.) And John informs us (Rev. vii. 2-4) that he "saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God;" and that "he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Thus the mark which God sets upon his people, when he causes the gospel to come to them, "not in word, but in power," is, as we have seen, his own image; and it constitutes an infallible sign, as I would now wish you especially to observe, that the persons on whom it is impressed are the property of God—are his redeemed children,—that they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs together with Christ of all the glory of the eternal world. It is, as I have said, an infallible sign; for God never sets this mark or seal upon any but his own children,—or rather, I should perhaps say, by this sealing he constitutes them his children; for we are all "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." There are indeed many cases in which there is manifest room to doubt whether the process of

sealing has passed upon an individual, *i. e.* whether the Divine image has been impressed upon him; but nothing can be more certain than that all who bear that image are the special property, and people, and children of God. That sealing to which we now refer constitutes the witness in themselves of the truth of God's record, or the gospel, which every believer possesses.

I am not ignorant that the witness of the Spirit that we are the sons of God is supposed by many to be a direct revelation of that important fact to the mind of an individual. The Scriptures are, however, decidedly adverse to this supposition. They assure us that it is not the office of the Spirit to communicate a new revelation, but to lead us into a spiritual understanding of the old. He takes of the things of Christ, and reveals *them* unto our minds. The word "witness" does by no means either necessarily or naturally convey the notion of an inward suggestion; it is often used as equivalent in meaning with "evidence." "I have greater witness," said our Lord, "than that of John," *i. e.* greater evidence of the truth and Divinity of my mission; "for the works that I do bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." The witness which the Spirit bears with our spirit that we are the children of God is the testimony which he has borne, or the description he has given in the New Testament, of the characters of those who are warranted in considering themselves the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. The witness which a man has in himself of the truth of God's record is the sealing of which we have been speaking—the image of God impressed upon his understanding and conscience and heart and conduct,—that discernment of the excellence and glory of the things of the Spirit of God,—that holy exercise of the affections which results from this discern-

ment,—and that spirit of love and confidence and joy which God sheds abroad in the hearts of believers. This is that mark which the devil cannot counterfeit. He may make a false suggestion to the minds of sinners that they are the children of God, and thereby delude and destroy them; but he cannot impress the mark of the Divine image upon them. All who have been sealed with that holy Spirit of promise are unquestionably the children of God. There is nothing more royal, says one, than the royal signet. It is the great mark of distinction whereby that which proceeds from the king, or belongs to him, may be known from anything else. It is impossible to conceive then that the seal of the great King of heaven and earth, enstamped on the heart, should less decidedly mark out his property, and afford a less certain criterion of his children. “God hath sealed us.” The apostle adds—

Secondly,—“and hath given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;” and that is our security that we shall finally enjoy the glory which is in reserve for his people in the world above. For the earnest is part of the stipulated wages given in hand, in pledge of the faithful payment of the remainder. It is part of the promised inheritance granted now, in token of the full possession of the whole hereafter. Hence the Spirit is called “the firstfruits” by the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans; for as the firstfruits of old were offered to God, and became a pledge of the subsequent harvest, so the possession of the Spirit is a pledge, on the part of God, that a full harvest of blessedness and glory awaits all in whose hearts he has taken up his abode. Hence also the same apostle says to the Ephesian believers, “In whom, when ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest

of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." In the first of these passages, if not in the latter, it will be observed that the redemption of the body from the grave—forming as it will do the consummation of future blessedness—is represented as the grand object of Christian hope and desire. Now of the ultimate enjoyment of this object, the possession of the Spirit may be considered an earnest or pledge, in the

First place; for since he makes their bodies his temple, it is impossible to doubt that he will be as disposed, as he is able, to rescue what is now his habitation from the state of humiliation and dishonour to which death will reduce it. How great must be the interest—to speak after the manner of man—which this Divine Agent takes in the dust which, before the grave had despoiled it of its beauty, and resolved it into its original elements, had been admitted to so intimate a relationship with himself! Oh! my brethren, can we wonder to hear the apostle saying, "For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you?"

But, secondly, the possession of the Spirit may be regarded as an earnest or pledge of the full consummation of all our hopes and desires in the world above, because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Jehovah never intends to resume anything which he gives, in the proper sense of the word, to any of his creatures. Hence our temporal blessings are rather to be regarded as loans than gifts. God lends many things to the ungodly. But he gives nothing but to his own people. He both lends and gives to them. He lends them temporal blessings; but he gives to them the spiritual. He

lends them life and health and strength. He lends them their daily bread, and their domestic comforts; but he gives them his Holy Spirit. This is a blessing never to be permanently resumed. And hence though spiritual light may wax dim, and appear at times indeed even on the point of expiring, it never can be finally extinguished. And hence, further, though the body is doomed to death because of sin, yet, since the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead has been given to dwell in his people for ever, his omnipotent power will certainly quicken their mortal bodies at the time appointed by the Father.

Again: since the earnest of the Spirit, and the sealing of the Spirit, may be regarded, as to all practical purposes, as if they were identical,—the Spirit never taking up his abode in the heart without impressing the image of God upon it,—I add, thirdly, that the possession of the Spirit is an earnest of future glory, because it is the commencement of eternal life in the present state. The firstfruits were a part of the harvest, as well as a pledge of the remaining part. And the statement of the inspired volume is, that it is life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord. It not only ensures the blessing, but is the blessing itself. In harmony with this the apostle John says, “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,”—*i. e.* he has in himself sufficient evidence of the truth of God’s testimony that he “hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.” He has the thing witnessed of, viz. eternal life in himself. He has received the blessing of which the testimony speaks; and he has received it in the way in which the testimony says it is to be enjoyed —by believing. How then can he doubt the truth of the testimony itself? “The Lord,” says the psalmist,

"will give grace and glory." And what is grace, but glory begun? and what is glory, but grace consummated? Grace is the seed; glory is the ear, and the ripe full corn in the ear. Grace is the bud; glory is that bud expanded into the full-blown flower. Grace is the first light of the morning breaking over the distant hills; glory is the full blaze of the meridian sun. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him," said our Lord, "shall never thirst; for the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

If God then, my hearers, has given you his Spirit, you have in that donation a pledge of all that he has promised to bestow in the world above. The light and purity and blessedness of heaven are brought down into your souls; and as the nature of Canaan's goodly fruit was ascertained by the clusters which were carried into the wilderness, so you, my Christian brethren, may form a tolerably correct conception of the nature of the heavenly glory—though its amount cannot be grasped by feeble powers like ours—by reflecting upon those moments in which you have tasted the highest and most sacred enjoyments in the present state. God has given to us, my brethren, the earnest of the Spirit,—a pledge and a specimen of what is in reserve for us hereafter. Our present discernment of the nature and excellence and glory of the things of the Spirit is thus an earnest of that more enlarged and comprehensive acquaintance with them to which we shall attain, when we shall see Jesus as he is. Our present progress in holiness is a pledge of those higher attainments to which we shall rise, when we shall be made like to our exalted Head—when we shall bear the image of God in far more lively and legible and imperishable characters than is

the case at present—when all our powers shall be resolved into love, and all our notes into praise. The sacred pleasure which we now experience in the ways and the worship of God is only “the EARNEST of the Spirit in our hearts,” given by HIM as a foretaste of heaven’s full fruition! AMEN.

A MISSIONARY SERMON.

THE WEALTH OF THE CHURCH, A GIFT AND A LOAN FROM
GOD, THE GROUND OF AN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE
MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

LUKE xix. 13.—“ Occupy till I come.”

You have long been in the habit of hearing, and I trust you most firmly believe, that the world, without a revelation from God, is a moral desert,—that the holy seed of Divine truth, accompanied by the showers of heavenly influence, will cause that desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. You have seen, by the command of our Maker himself, that the church is laid under an obligation, from which no power whatever can set her free, to scatter this holy seed in all parts of the globe; and you rejoice in the assurance that as the rain cometh down and snow from heaven, and watereth the earth, and causeth it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall His word be,—that it shall not return void,—that it shall accomplish that which God pleaseth, and prosper in the thing to which he sent it. God grant, though we have seen as yet only here and there a verdant spot in the

trackless moral desert, as the eye runs over the circumference of the globe, that we yet may see the whole covered with the fruits of righteousness and peace, and that we may see the inhabitants of all lands pouring forth their songs of praise to the great Lord and Redeemer of all! “And let all the people say, Amen!” for without this grateful incense,—

“What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft on Ceylon’s isle,”—

there is nothing precious and fragrant to the heart of Christian piety.

This universal diffusion of the gospel—for which I trust you have all just now devoutly prayed—can only be secured by the use of appropriate and divinely appointed means; since the purposes of God are effected by a system of instrumentality designed to evince his wisdom and goodness in adapting the means to the end,—and to secure great moral benefit to man, by making one human being the instrument of communicating blessings to another. He *saves* by means; and the gospel is the instrument of salvation. He sends the gospel to men by means; and hence human agency is necessary—I mean, of course, that it is so by Divine appointment—to the universal diffusion and general triumph of the gospel as God’s agency. And I hold it to be an expectation as deeply injurious, as it is utterly wild and baseless, that God will directly interpose and effect by miracle what he has commanded the church to undertake, and has given to its members the means of accomplishing.

Now the precise point to which I would call your attention is the duty which devolves upon the church of employing the means which God has appointed for the salvation of the world. If you ask me what they are?—

I answer, the translation and circulation of the word of God, and the employment of living agents to direct the attention of men to the momentous truths which that word contains. I particularize and represent both these means as essential, because I do not believe the world will ever be evangelized by the employment of one of them alone. It is not my duty to state which of these instruments possesses the greater efficiency; nor, if I had any decided opinion upon that point, do I think that I should be forward to state it. I altogether dislike the practice of setting the Bible Society above the Missionary Society, or setting the Missionary Society above the Bible Society. We should rather regard them as twin sisters, the offspring of the God of love—both worthy of our affection and support,—taking different departments indeed, but each a necessary department, in the great work of reclaiming an apostate world to the knowledge and favour and enjoyment of God.

It is evident, then, that my subject would justify me, and indeed that it would seem to require me, to enforce upon you, as an integrant part of the church of God, the employment of all the means which are necessary to the placing in the hands of every individual of the human family the written word of God,—and to the bringing within the reach of his organs of hearing the sound of the living voice, unfolding its sacred truths, that, with the blessing of God, he may understand and believe them, and live for ever. Since our blessed Master has committed the treasure of the gospel to the church, that by its influence the whole world may be evangelized,—and since Bibles and missionaries must be sent to the whole world to secure this glorious object,—you will see at once that I should be justified in telling the church as a body—not of course individually—that its members are

bound to find persons who are acquainted, or to make themselves acquainted, with every existing language on the face of the globe. Or how can the Scriptures be translated? That they are further bound to see that these multiplied translations are actually made; and then to establish a system of agency which shall give them circulation, and carry them to the very ends of the earth. And, further than this, you will see that I should be justified in telling the church, as a body, that it is bound to engage missionaries in sufficient numbers to execute the commission which our Master has given,—to provide for them any measure of previous training and instruction, which may be necessary to communicate to them the greatest possible degree of fitness for their work, which human agency can confer; that it is bound—if the object cannot be attained otherwise—to sacrifice some measure of its own comfort and edification, to part with some of its burning and shining lights, that they may go and diffuse their radiance and their fervour in the regions of darkness and coldness and death; and, finally, that when labourers in sufficient abundance are secured, it is further bound to take the charge of enabling them to go to all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature.

It is in vain to allege—as I think at least—that these statements would be perfectly correct, and that all this would be the duty of the church, if it had the power of accomplishing it. I say the church has the power; for do you suppose the Saviour would have prescribed an impossible task? and the church has wanted nothing but the will. If we throw out of our consideration those few parts of the globe where despotism would not have permitted the books of Scripture to circulate, nor the living voice of the preacher to be heard, had one or the

other or both been sent to them, I maintain that it is in consequence of a criminal neglect of duty on the part of the church that the whole human family have not access to the pages of revelation, and to the presence of evangelists who might more fully unfold to them their sacred contents. How mysterious is it, say some men, that though the gospel has existed in the world for two thousand years, it is as yet known to so inconsiderable a portion of its inhabitants! Now, unless it be mysterious that the church should be inert, and negligent of duty, I confess I can see nothing mysterious at all in this painful and humiliating fact. The true solution of the matter is, that all nations have not an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Divine truth, because the church has sent that truth to a few nations only. There are only two parties, (I speak strongly on the subject, because strong language is necessary to rouse the church,) God and man, on whom the blame can be cast. Our modern theological *illuminati*—who tell us that the world can only be converted by miracle—that the circulation of the Scriptures, and the preaching of the gospel, by competent agents, are powerless instruments with which to attack the world's idolatry and depravity—and that the Son of God must descend from heaven, and reign with more than all the splendour of an Eastern monarch, before much good can be effected—are, I deliberately think, casting the blame upon God; for why has all this—this miracle—this assumption of visible and temporal power and glory—been so long delayed? Let us be assured, my brethren, that the blame rests not with God, but with the church. It is not because the means which he has himself appointed—the circulation of the Scriptures, and the preaching of the gospel—are inadequate to the evangelization of the world, that the world is not evan-

gelized, but because the church has not employed the means. It is to utter a libel upon that word which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"—upon that great Being from whom it emanated—upon that gracious and omnipotent Spirit by whose influences it is attended, to say that it may be universally diffused, and universally enforced upon the consciences of men, without proving an universal blessing. Let us at least have the justice, as well as the modesty, to abstain from proclaiming the inefficacy of the means till we have fairly tried them; and *then*, I feel convinced, a regard to truth would as effectually silence them, as *now* a regard to decency ought to do it,—and that their blessed effects would show, with all the force of moral demonstration, that the evangelization of the world is not more truly the purpose of God, than the circulation of the Scriptures and the preaching of the gospel are means to effect it.

Thus my subject would justify me in conducting you leisurely through that extensive field of remark over which I have led you to take this very hasty glance; but were I to do it, I should exhaust both your patience and your time. I must therefore—to use a somewhat homely but very significant illustration—tether you in one part of this field; I must confine my remarks to *one* of the means which the church is bound to supply for securing the evangelization of the world: and I do this with the less regret, because an ample supply of that particular means will lead to an ample supply of every other; for let the church but provide the money,—and I will answer for it that the talents and the men will not be wanting to translate the sacred records into every existing language, and to carry them, when translated, to the very ends of the earth.

The statement then to which I now proceed to call your attention is the following; viz. *that it is the duty of the church to provide all the pecuniary means which are necessary to secure the universal diffusion of Divine truth.*

“OCCUPY TILL I COME.”

It is not my intention to confine myself to the illustration of this particular passage. I shall use it rather as a basis on which to erect certain propositions which I wish to lay before you; and the illustration of which seems necessary to secure the full practical influence of the general statement which has now been made.

FIRST.—Then I observe, *that all the property which the church as a body, and all the property which every individual of that body possesses, is to be regarded as having been BESTOWED by God.* “Shall I give utterance to this palpable truism?”—I could not avoid saying to myself, before I resolved to permit the escape of the words from my lips. “Does not every one know this? Does not every one acknowledge that, while the fountains and sources of evil are many, the fountain or source of good is but one? Is there a rational being to be found, even without the confines of the church, and far less within them, who does not confess that he has nothing, absolutely nothing, except what God has given to him?—so that, were everything to be resumed which he has communicated, that we—unlike the oak, which, when scathed by the lightnings of heaven, preserves its existence, if not its life—should lose our property, our friends, our domestic enjoyments, our health, our life, our bodies themselves; yea, that our spirits would not escape in this general wreck of our blessings,—for the soul is a spark which Divine power has kindled, and dies when

Divine sustentation is withheld!" I answer to all these questions, that the difference is great between assenting to these sentiments, and firmly and evidently and practically believing them. A man may have the truth that his property, as well as every other blessing, is from God, on his tongue, without having it in his heart,—that like the moonbeam it may play upon the surface of his character, without entering, as the solar ray, and penetrating, and finding its way to the hidden principles of life and action; and thus it remains inert and inoperative. I answer further, that even Christians, who not only acknowledge, but are really sensible that their property was bestowed by God, do not feel this so powerfully and habitually, and therefore practically, as they ought. They are apt to sink in this respect almost down to the level of the profane world, who acknowledge that property is a God-send, when, without any effort or any expectation on their part, it descends upon them as if from the clouds of heaven; but who imagine, when it flows in upon them, through the ordinary channels of sobriety and diligence and attention, and the prudent and wise and persevering exertion of superior talent, that they are then to be considered as in part at least the makers of their own fortune. All experience shows how difficult it is to preserve the important principle, that property, however obtained, is a donation from God,—to preserve it from all contamination, by the base alloy to which I have referred, in the circumstances which have now been described. My brethren, I wish to lodge this sacred principle, freed from all alloy, in your bosoms. I wish to impress the sentiment upon your minds, that, whatever measure of property you possess, and in whatever manner it may have flowed in upon you, it was as truly bestowed upon you by God, and that to him the praise for its pos-

session is as exclusively due, as if an angel from heaven had appeared and showered down thousands of gold and silver into your lap. Riches and honour come from God: all things come from God. If wealth has descended to us by inheritance, it was by the arrangements of his providence that it came into our possession. If we have derived it from the bequests of relatives and friends, it was God that disposed them thus to remember us. If we have amassed it by talent and industry, it was God who gave us the faculty and opportunity of acquiring it. Let it have reached us through whatever medium it will, it came originally from the hands of God; for it is he “who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”

SECONDLY.—I observe that *the property which has thus been bestowed upon the members of the church by God has been LENT by him to them—not given.* The foregoing statement exhibits the source from whence it proceeded; the last, the tenure on which it is held. The use of wealth he entrusts to the church for a season; but the proprietorship of that wealth he retains in his own hand. “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.” “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” In reference to other men, says an excellent writer, our wealth, if honestly acquired, is our own; but in reference to God, it is not our own. In this point of view, there is an essential difference between spiritual and temporal blessings. The latter are subservient to, and designed to prepare us for the more full enjoyment of the former. The possession of them is necessarily limited to the period of our continuance in the present state; for we brought nothing into the world,—and it is certain that we can carry nothing out of it. And hence our temporal blessings, which are to be resumed, are loans; and our spi-

ritual mercies, gifts. God lends us our strength, our property, our domestic comforts; but he gives us his Holy Spirit, and all the infinite blessings of his salvation. This is a sentiment, my brethren, in connection with the one to which I have just called your attention, which it is of immense importance for us to impress very deeply upon our minds. If we err, either in speculation—of which there is perhaps comparatively little danger,—or in feeling—of which there is considerable danger; if we thus err in reference to the source from whence our property has been derived, or the tenure on which it is held, it is not to be supposed for a moment—it is even not morally possible that we should devote that property to the purposes to which the discoveries of the great day will show us it ought to have been consecrated. Let me then, my brethren, with all the earnestness of one who feels that he is not his own—that his powers are not his own—that all are God's, and should be employed for God, call upon you to remember that your property is not your own,—that it as truly belongs to God now as before it came into your custody,—that you have no right, in reference to God at least, (though, as I have observed, in reference to man you have the right,) to employ it in what manner you please,—that you must not join in the impious cry of the profane world, “*May not I do what I will with mine own?*” The Proprietor of your wealth, as he listens, may say with indignation,—*Yes, truly you may; but nothing you have IS YOUR OWN,—your property is mine, and ought to be consecrated to my glory.*

THIRDLY.—I observe that *the property thus entrusted to us as a LOAN was committed to us for a specific purpose,—the purpose which Jehovah designs to accomplish in all his works, and in all his donations.* “*OCCUPY,*” is the

command of our Lord, “till I come,—employ what I commit to your charge in the promotion of the purposes which were intended to be answered by making you its depository.” And if we walk by the light of the Holy Scriptures, we shall at once see that the grand and ultimate object of God in the bestowment of wealth was the promotion of his own glory, in the evangelization and salvation of an apostate and a ruined world. I mean not to affirm that no subordinate objects are attained, or intended to be secured, by the bestowment of property; but that when we reach these we are not to regard ourselves as at the termination of our journey,—that God expects us to go further,—and that the man who does not stretch beyond them does not fulfil the great end of his being. We are to honour the Lord with our substance, and with the firstfruits of all our increase. Doubtless, one end intended to be answered by the bestowment of property is to enable those who receive it to provide subsistence for themselves and their families. Life must be sustained, or we cannot promote the Divine glory. To secure the great ends of our being, then, we must devote to the purpose of our own support what is necessary to secure it. And as our families are dependent upon us, we must not desert them; for he that provideth not for his own, especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. So that in all cases in which the provision of necessary supplies for himself and his family requires the whole income of an individual, it is manifest that all must be devoted to that one object. If he has really nothing to devote to the cause of God, nothing is demanded, nothing is expected. It is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. But even here there is an opportunity for an indi-

vidual to glorify God with the pittance of property which he possesses, scanty though it be; and this is required at his hands. I mean, it is expected from him that, in the expenditure of that pittance, his ultimate object should be to promote the Divine glory, by a careful attention to those duties which prolonged life and health enable him and his family to discharge. And if there be a poor man in this congregation who has not looked forwards to this ultimate object, who, in the expenditure of his pittance, has thought only of satisfying the cravings of appetite, or of supporting life, and not of glorifying God by continuing to live, I entreat him to listen to the words of a friend, who tells him a painful truth, but tells it him for his good, that he has not as yet fulfilled the great purposes of his being. He has done what an animal does, and little more.

Further: I am not disposed to deny that another subordinate end intended to be answered by the bestowment of property is the promotion of the happiness of those upon whom it is conferred. The possession of property puts it in the power of some individuals to secure many gratifications of which poverty must be content to remain destitute. And I am by no means disposed to contend that God, in giving to them this power, has interdicted them from the use of it. It is a mistake, I grant, to suppose that the man of wealth is bound to preserve his scale of personal and domestic expenditure on a level with that of the peasant, who toils for his daily bread,—that the Christian who has property ought to restrict himself to the bare necessities of life. I believe that our heavenly Father allows a liberal use of that property. I believe that society and station have claims upon us; and that it is accordingly lawful to take, to a certain extent, the gratifications

which station and wealth enable an individual to command. But the question—a question of great practical importance, and a question in reference to which the Christian church, in my judgment, stands more in need of instruction and admonition than any other,—the great question, I say, is—To what extent is it lawful to do it? No one, who makes even the loosest profession of religion, will venture to affirm that it would be lawful to devote all to the purposes of personal gratification. Even though the promotion of private happiness should be allowed to be an end in the bestowment of wealth, it is evidently a subordinate one,—and so inferior to the ultimate end that, like the stars which are quenched by the blaze of the sun, it can scarcely be seen or thought of in connection with it; for what is the happiness of a worm compared with the glory of the Almighty? The great object of God, in the bestowment of wealth upon his people, is to put into their hands an important instrument for promoting his glory; and the glory of God is identified with the diffusion of the gospel. Hence the general promulgation of the gospel is described as a revelation of the glory of the Lord, that all flesh may see it together. This is emphatically God's end. What then shall we say of the man—especially what shall we say of the professed Christian—who takes his property, and devotes it to what I will call his *own ends*,—employs it exclusively as an instrument of procuring to himself, and his connexions, an increased measure of the comforts of life, of costly and refined and elegant enjoyments? or who determines to gratify himself, and the various members of his family, in these points of view, to the full extent of their desires, and then devotes the remaining miserable pittance to the cause of God? Surely, this is reversing the proper order. How can it

be doubted that God's end must be thought of primarily, and our own secondarily? Every Christian is bound to provide for the cause of God in the first instance; and then if any surplus remains, and not till then, is he at liberty to take that surplus, and procure with it an increased measure of personal and domestic comforts and enjoyments.

I know full well that these are not the principles which are acted upon by the great body of professed Christians, by the great body even of the real members of the church of God. The desire of accumulating property—of not merely preserving the station we hold, but of pressing upwards in the ranks of society—of obtaining independence for ourselves, and of securing it for our children—has been caught by the church from the world. And the melancholy result is, that with a few splendid exceptions, the far greater part of the incomes of our prosperous tradesmen, and our wealthy men, is absorbed by the means which are taken to secure these objects; and for the cause of God there is little or nothing to spare. I greatly mourn over this state of matters. Nothing, I acknowledge, appears to me so great an obstacle to the spread of the gospel as the practical inattention of the church to the precept, "Honour the Lord with thy substance." I tremble not when I see the scoffer deride, the infidel mock, or the ungodly blaspheme. I tremble not when from the visibly profane world I hear the language of proud daring, and of bold defiance, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?" and then observe them, with shocking consistency, suiting the action to the word, and casting the words of God away from them. I tremble not when I think of that proud and fierce and mighty spirit—"the prince of the power of the air, who ruleth in the hearts

of the children of disobedience,"—and when I recollect that there is no plan which diabolical ingenuity can devise, or thousands of devils execute, which will not be put into incessant operation to oppose the progress of the work of God at home and abroad. I tremble not when I think of these things. Give me but an improved and a sanctified church—the members of which no one can confound with the men of the world,—who manifestly seek not their own ends, but God's end,—who prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy,—whose every word and every action render it apparent that they have consecrated their time, their property, their talents to the great cause of God, and that their supreme enjoyments are found in advancing the Divine glory by promoting the evangelization of the world;—let me but see this, and I shall feel assured that the millennium is at hand,—yea, that its glories have already broken over the world! But when I see the church, as a body, as I am sure is the case, withholding more than is meet,—when I see many of its members giving grudgingly,—when I see multitudes of professed and acknowledged Christians acting as if it were a point of conscience with them to devote as little, instead of as much of their property as possible to the cause of God,—when I see those, who say that their treasure is in heaven, grasping at the riches and honours of the world—professing that wealth is an unsatisfying portion, and yet pursuing it as if it were the supreme good—admitting that their property should be devoted to God, and yet taking the main portion of it for themselves, and then giving the miserable surplus to Him,—when I see and remember these things, I confess I do tremble. Or rather I should tremble, if I did not know that that omnipotent grace which can convert the world can also rouse and transform—I had

almost said *convert*—the church; for I wish not to disguise my opinion, that the greatest hindrance to the spread of the gospel is the worldly-mindedness of the church—the apathy of the church—the frozen charity, and the stinted and niggardly beneficence of the church. The church has never habitually given, if ever given,—and God knows that I include myself in the charge which I thus bring against others, and desire to stimulate myself as well as to rouse and animate them,—the church has never yet given in her spirit and conduct a fair exhibition of Christianity to the world; nor has it ever fairly brought its energies of holy example and talent and property to bear upon the world. There must be a reformation in all these respects. The light of Christianity must shine forth in the lives of Christians more fully,—not as if it came through a frost glass, which throws the hues of winter over the bloom and verdure of spring. The donations must be more liberal.

While I do not condemn our men of wealth, as I have already said, for adopting a style of living, and a scale of expenditure, superior to those which necessity enforces upon others, I would humbly suggest to them whether there should not be greatly more of moderation in this point of view than there has been,—whether there ought not to be a great and visible difference between them and the men of the world in this respect,—whether the great question with Christians should be not, How far may we lawfully go with the world in personal gratification and expenditure and show? but, What is the lowest point at which the claims which society has upon us—for it has claims—will allow us to stop short of them, that we may have more to devote to the cause of God? And when the multitude of professed Christians shall begin to act on these principles, our religious

institutions will not lack funds for carrying on their enterprises of mercy. A single tide of that needless expenditure which now, at the very best, rolls down our streets to waste, would carry on its broad bosom to the very extremity of the globe many a goodly missionary galleon, more preciously freighted than those which brought into the old world the treasures of the new—laden with the seed of the kingdom,—that seed which can cause the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose, and fill the face of the whole earth with fruit!

Well, but if every Christian, in the appropriation of his property, is bound, in the first instance, to provide for the cause of God, is there any rule which may serve as a guide in reference to the amount of our pious contributions? I cannot suppress the utterance of a fear, before I proceed to touch upon this point, (a fear which I have long entertained,) that there is at least no rule which is generally—to say the least of it—practically applied. If the *act* of contributing to religious purposes is prompted by principle, I apprehend that certain prominent facts render it but too manifest that the *amount* contributed is regulated by accident or custom. I look over the list of subscribers to some of our religious institutions. The first sum mentioned is a guinea; or perhaps a sovereign, according to a recently introduced custom,—by which twenty per cent. is lost to the cause of God, without any gain to the contributor. The next is perhaps a guinea, and the next; and so we proceed through several pages, with it may be a sprinkling of two, five, and ten guineas,—but they are, “like angels’ visits, few and far between.” Now if it be in the last degree unlikely that these one guinea subscribers stand on precisely the same level in reference to property, what conclusion can we come to, but that the amount

of contribution is not under the guidance of conscience and principle. Certain however it is, in my apprehension at least, that this ought to be the case. As responsible beings, we are answerable to God, not only for giving or withholding our property, but for the amount communicated in every particular instance. The withholding more than is meet, which the Scriptures mention, and mention only to condemn, is not refraining from giving altogether, but refusing to give in proportion to our means. The rule is to give as God hath prospered us. The same principles on which the apostle exhorted the disciples at Corinth to minister to the wants of the poor saints at Jerusalem, that there might be an equality, should stimulate our wealthy Christians to abound in liberality, that their more splendid donations may prevent that loss to the cause of God which it must otherwise sustain from the poverty of some of its members, and which prevents their casting a single mite into the spiritual treasury. By the individual, my brethren, who acts under the full influence of Christian principles, it will as certainly be an inquiry, when a call is made upon his liberality, "Shall I give five guineas, or ten guineas, or a hundred, or one guinea, or a shilling?" as "Shall I give anything at all?"

Still you will perhaps say to me that I have not as yet laid down any general rule, applicable to all persons and circumstances, in reference to the amount of our contributions to the cause of God,—a rule which will enable us to decide at once, and without any difficulty, what amount of our income it is lawful to devote to those subordinate ends of which we have been speaking, and what we are bound to consecrate to the ultimate and supreme end. I answer, that the spirit and genius of

our religion, in connection with the present state of the church, now no longer a minor, does not warrant the expectation of so precise a rule as the one required. The object of Christianity is to supply general principles, and to enthroned them in the heart, and thus to bring the whole character under their influence, and every action under their direction, rather than to supply minute and definite rules, which might possibly be observed in the letter,—thus fostering fallacious hopes, while their spirit was so grossly violated as to render the very act of compliance with the letter itself offensive in the sight of God. Under another dispensation, and while the church was a minor, it was doubtless proper that a tenth part of the income of the Israelites should be distinctly specified as the portion they were bound to devote to the cause and the worship of God; but it is equally proper, under the present dispensation, that the precise amount should not be specified, but trusted to the influence of those great principles which cannot be fully understood and believed without converting the debauchee into a man of purity, and the miser into a man of liberality. I have therefore deemed it more expedient to-night to exhibit and enforce the general principles—that we are to honour the Lord with our substance—to give as God has prospered us—to devote the main part of our property to the promotion of that object which constitutes the ultimate and supreme end for the attainment of which God has bestowed it—than to attempt to lay down a precise and definite rule in regard to the amount,—a rule which, if these principles are firmly enthroned in your hearts, you will feel to have as little need to require, as I have ability I at once acknowledge to supply.

There are however one or two other general considerations, which may afford some assistance in determining

the question in reference to the amount of contributions, to which I would call your attention.

First.—The fact to which I have just referred, that a tenth part of the income of the Israelites was by Divine appointment appropriated to the cause and worship of God, may afford us some assistance. That portion was devoted to the single purpose of providing for the stated worship of God. Can it then be supposed for a moment that we who, in addition to this object, are called upon to evangelize the world,—at any rate, that the middle and higher ranks amongst us can, in ordinary cases, contribute less than a tenth of our income to the service of God, without incurring the charge of withholding more than is meet? For my own part, I acknowledge I have long doubted whether a man is worthy of the name of a Christian who does not considerably, very considerably surpass a Jew in this respect; and yet are there not some with whose liberality that of a Jew appears, on comparison, almost princely?

Secondly.—It may afford us assistance on this point to reflect on the portion of our substance, says an excellent writer, whose words I quote, which we expend on what may be termed the comforts, the luxuries, the superfluities of life. How far it is consistent with Christian duty to spend any part of our property in what, strictly speaking, comes under the two last denominations, is a subject which deserves grave consideration by all who would live as ever under the great Task-master's eye. “But the observation,” adds this writer, “must I think carry intuitive conviction to every mind, that that person is not liberal in his pecuniary contributions to religious purposes who does not devote to this object more, much more than he does to what, even in the station he occupies, must be considered as luxuries and

superfluities; and that the offering of a man who devotes nothing to the cause of God, and humanity, till almost every demand of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is gratified, though considerable in itself, partakes not at all of the nature of sacrifice." I appeal to the common sense and to the conscience of my audience, if that person is not, in a religious point of view, criminally penurious, who, though he may not withhold the accustomed subscription from religious institutions, can, without hesitation, expend on a single ornament for the person, or the mansion, or on an entertainment, or scheme of amusement, more money than the amount of his religious expenses for a whole year.

Thirdly.—It may afford us some assistance to reflect upon the magnitude of the work to accomplish which our Christian liberality is required. That work, as we have seen, is the evangelization of the world; or, in other words, the provision of bibles and missionaries for the whole family of man. This is the work expected from the church; and its duty will not have been fully discharged till this work is completed. Now reflect for a moment upon its magnitude. Of the eight hundred millions of which the population of the world is supposed to consist, between five and six hundred millions are totally destitute of the light of Divine truth,—they are without God and hope in the world. What prodigious exertions must be made for a long succession of years to evangelize, in the sense explained above, this immense and almost infinite multitude! Is it likely ever to be done at the present rate of contribution, while so many add their mites to the spiritual treasury, who ought to cast in their hundreds,—and, what is still more lamentable, think themselves liberal after all? Why the present scale of effort put forth by the church to christianize six hundred

millions of apostate men is really something like attempting to drain the ocean with an egg-shell. There must be more prayer—more vigorous, combined, persevering exertions; there must be a scale of contribution less, almost ludicrously, at variance with the magnitude of the object. I join with an excellent writer in thinking, that it will hereafter excite the astonishment of those who live where Christian principle has obtained its legitimate authority over the human faculties and habits, how good men could possibly think that they not merely did their duty, but were entitled to the praise of generosity, when dedicating to God what must appear to *them* a miserably disproportionate share of their worldly substance.

Finally.—It may afford us assistance to recollect the contributions to the cause of God which were offered by his people in a former, and an inferior dispensation. I can only refer you to the conduct of David and the Israelites, at the building of the temple. (1 Chron. xxix. 1–9.) In reference to the magnitude of these donations, I have only to add that, in addition to the vast sums which David had amassed during his reign for the building of the temple, he, on the occasion referred to, devoted to this pious purpose what is equivalent to about eighteen millions of our money, and his people's joint contributions considerably exceeded thirty millions.

There is one other general proposition to which I must for a moment call your attention before I conclude. We have seen that our property was bestowed by God—that we hold it on trust for the discharge of a specified object. I now add—

FOURTHLY.—*That the time is approaching when the Proprietor will come, and demand an account of our stewardship.* “OCCUPY,” is his language, “till I come; and then be prepared to render an explicit statement of the manner

in which you have discharged the trust I committed to you." Your time forbids all enlargement here; and I must therefore content myself with pressing upon you the solemn consideration, that the manner in which you have employed, and the purposes for which you have expended every farthing of your property, will undergo the strictest scrutiny at the great day. Man has no right to call his brother to account in this point of view, but God has; and as Moral Governor he cannot fail to exercise that right. What then must be the condition of those to whom God has given property, and who have not devoted any, even the least portion of it, to the great purpose for which it was bestowed? Of the miser, whose riches are corrupted, whose garments are moth-eaten, whose gold and silver is cankered? The rust of them shall be a witness against him. Of the debauchee, who lives in pleasure on the earth, and is wanton? To his confusion, he will then find that he had been nourishing his heart as in a day of slaughter.

And what will then be the condition of the Christian who in the present world withholds more than is meet? I will only trust myself to say, that if then, when eternity in all its solemnity and grandeur, and infinite importance, and time with all its insignificance, shall burst fully upon his view,—that if then, I say, through grace, his Master shall not be ashamed of him, it is difficult to see how he can avoid being ashamed of himself.

Brethren, I have done. The subject is far from being exhausted; but I dare trespass upon your time no longer. I have spoken plainly, and with a little apprehension that some may think too plainly. But I have spoken under the influence of the solemn recollection, that I must render an account of what I say, as well as all of us of what we contribute to the cause of God. I have

acquitted my conscience in speaking; let us all acquit our consciences in giving, and the results will be glorious. God calls upon us to do this—the heathen call upon us to do it—character and consistency call upon us to do it. Can this united appeal be in vain?

“ Shall we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,—
Shall we to man benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! oh Salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah’s name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole;
Till o’er our ransomed nature
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign!”

C O U N S E L S

TO A

YOUNG MINISTER ON COMMENCING HIS OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENTS:

A CHARGE DELIVERED AT AN ORDINATION.*

1 Tm. iv. 16.—“Take heed unto thyself ——.”
Col. iv. 17.—“Take heed to the ministry ——.”

You will, I trust, my young brother, regard the hints I may be able to offer—for they must not be designated by any higher title—as the suggestions of one who most devoutly desires that the blessing of God may abide on you and on your flock; and you will accompany me

* [The contents of these volumes will place fully before the reader the nature of those instructions which Dr. Payne imparted to his students during their college *curriculum*; and it has been thought that such COUNSELS as these—solemn, pointed, and evangelical—designed to direct them in discharging efficiently the duties of the office for which they had, under his guidance, been preparing—would form a happy sequel to the Lectures, and an *appropriate* conclusion to this work. It has not been possible to ascertain for whose ordination this discourse was prepared. To those who knew the excellent Author, it will appear at once as a fair exhibition of his manifest solicitude and spirit on such solemn occasions.]

in your supplications that his presence and gracious influence may render my imperfect suggestions the means of good to both.

During a considerable portion of the time in which your views have been directed to the service of the sanctuary, you were in a position similar to that of the soldier while learning his exercise. The skill you have obtained has been more recently turned to practical account. You have already commenced the warfare,—you have taken the field against the foe,—you have drawn the sword from the scabbard; and I implore you to remember that that sword is never again to be returned to its sheath till, with the apostle, you can say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” May He who held the apostle as a star in his right hand make you “faithful unto death,” that hereafter you may receive “a crown of life!”

Solemn is the consideration, that he who putteth “his hand to the plough, and looking back, is not fit for the kingdom of God.” I do not imagine, indeed, that these words refer exclusively or directly to ministers; but they certainly imply that ministers cannot—in ordinary circumstances at least—retreat from the work in which they have embarked without disgrace and danger. You must therefore, my young friend, calculate upon remaining at your post till removed from it by the King of Terrors; and instead of thinking how you may retire with honour from the ranks, your inquiry must be how you can prosecute the warfare—a warfare which death only can close—with the strongest hopes of success? In

answering this inquiry, let me direct your special attention to the passages just read, and on which will be founded all the remarks I shall make; and they will separately form the general divisions of my discourse. “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*” “*Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.*”

I.

The first admonition is, “TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF.”

FIRST.—As to your CONDUCT, that it be in all respects as it becometh the gospel. It is incumbent on all Christians to deny “ungodliness and worldly lusts,” and to “live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” But there are considerations which render it especially important upon a Christian minister to pay a devout practical attention to this inspired injunction. Think of the positive injury which results from a violation of it on his part—the dishonour he does to his Master—the disgrace he brings upon his cause. Think of the suspicions he excites that there is no reality in religion, and the occasion he gives to the adversary to speak reproachfully. Think of the stumbling-block he throws in the way of Christians, and of the hardening tendency of his example upon the minds of the ungodly. Think of the enfeebling influence of sin upon a minister’s own mind,—how utterly impossible it is for him to reprove that conduct in others which he practises himself, and how vain must be all his hopes of success; and you will not wonder to hear the great Head of the church saying, “A bishop *must be blameless.*” That is, it must not only be impossible to charge him with habitual transgression, but not a single spot must appear on the

white robes of his profession; he must give no offence either “to the Jews or Gentiles, nor to the church of God.”

I need say nothing with reference to habitual sin in union with the ministerial character; because, happily, no individual can lift up his head in any of our churches whose general conduct is known to be at utter variance with his profession. But bear with me, my young friend, while I attempt to impress upon your mind the vast, the all but infinite importance of preserving a perfectly unblemished character—of holding up to all around you an example on which no stain can be seen,—which exhibits, in every point of view, what a Christian, and especially a Christian minister ought to be. The whole life of a minister should be pure as the driven snow. A single false step may bring him down from the height of reputation, and place him in the valley of humiliation for life—if not cast him into the pit of disgrace. Oh how affecting the consideration that a single action, committed in a moment of inconsideration or temptation, should rob a minister, and that for ever, as will frequently be the case, of the mighty moral influence of character, and compel him henceforward to wave a blemished flag in the camp of Him who was “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners!”

You, my young brother, have just commenced your career as a soldier of the Lamb; you dread the thought of disgracing your colours; you are inspired with a holy indignation against the conduct which has been just alluded to. But “let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.” I have no suspicion of your principles, your character, your sincerity. I give you full credit for feeling all that abhorrence of sin, in the case of ministers, which I am sure

you are ready to express; but in Christian affection and fidelity, I would remind you that many have said exactly what you are now ready to say, who have ultimately done what I fervently pray God will never leave you to do—brought disgrace upon their profession, and dishonour upon the name of Christ. Again I say, my beloved young friend, it is my happiness to have no feeling at all allied to suspicion with reference to you. Yet I cannot refrain from saying that the case of many who have fallen into the depths of disgrace may be yours, if the grace of God prevent not. There are the same corrupt propensities in your mind as in theirs. You are equally accessible to temptation; you have no more strength to resist it. You must be kept by Almighty power, or you fall—fall from ministerial reputation—fall into unbelief, impenitence, and eternal misery. Oh let it be the unceasing prayer of your heart, “Lead us not into temptation!” “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.” “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins.”

Again: I exhort you to see to it, not merely that your course be free from all *actual* misconduct, but from all SUSPICION of it. Ever bear in mind the exhortation of the apostle,—an exhortation so necessary to be regarded by every Christian, but especially by every Christian minister,—“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” There are, as you well know, men of equivocal reputation in the work of the ministry,—men over whose conduct an angel might weep tears of blood, if angels had such tears to shed, without being able to fix upon any one action as being positively wrong,—men who never suffer themselves to be found, beyond all question, on the wrong side of the line of demarcation, but who hover so perpetually upon its borders that we feel it impossible not to believe, that they are restrained by nothing but

unworthy and base motives from openly deserting to the camp of the enemy. You can never say that they are actually backbiters, or liars, or drunkards, for instance; but so near do they approach to such classes, that it is impossible to say they are not. I know no words sufficiently strong to express the contempt and abhorrence in which such conduct deserves to be held. The man who disgraces himself by it is pre-eminently noxious. Even the fox-hunting, card-playing, swearing, and drunken black-coated companion of the wildest country squire in existence does less injury to the cause of God than a man of equivocal reputation, in the position we are now contemplating, in connection with the ministry of the gospel.

Cæsar's wife must be above suspicion; and so must a minister of the gospel. If he be so unfortunate as to awaken anything like a general idea that he is not sound at heart, he is lost—lost beyond redemption. He had better seek the meanest employment than continue in the pulpit, if he cannot enter it with an unsullied reputation. Wherefore think you does the great Head of the church require that a bishop have “a good report of them that are without?” Wherefore? but because otherwise his hearers, so far from regarding what he says, will transfer a portion of the contempt they feel for him to the cause which he advocates, and so abhor and reject both of them together.

My beloved young friend, your character must defy scrutiny,—it must be above suspicion,—it must continue to be as unspotted and as unsuspected as it is at present; or you had better bury yourself in a wilderness, than proceed in your work enveloped in the dark covering of a blemished reputation. And to preserve your character from *suspicion*, it is necessary that all your actions be

unsuspicious,—that there be nothing equivocal or ambiguous in your conduct,—that it bear not even the appearance of evil, and that there be no approach towards anything forbidden—nothing in your actions or manner which would seem to say the secret movements of your mind, and your profession, are by no means in unison with each other. Against anything of this kind I would most earnestly and affectionately caution you. Oh! dread the appearance of evil as you dread sin itself; and be desirous at all times so to act as that no one shall be able even to misconstrue your conduct. Let *the man of God* be visible in all you do and say and enjoy.

Further: on this subject I would add, let your general conduct be marked by all that *propriety*, and *decorum*, and *prudence*, by which the ministers of the gospel should be ever distinguished. It is very possible for a minister, who is never guilty of an action calculated to bring his personal religion into serious question, to injure—and that very materially—his usefulness by inattention to this direction. There are visible in his conduct various little indiscretions, which, though scarcely any one of them perhaps amounts to what the apostle means by the appearance of evil, cannot be frequently committed without sinking him materially in the esteem and affections of those who witness them. They shake that feeling of entire confidence with which it is desirable a people should ever view their minister,—they break down that hedge of sacredness which uniform consistency of conduct will ever set up around his person,—they beget a feeling allied to contempt; and the words of a man who is not held in high respect are, humanly speaking, not likely to do much good.

Guard, my young friend, against anything of this kind. Let no minor indiscretions dim the lustre of your

Christian conduct and example. Be at *all times* the man of God. Be grave, sober, temperate, just, blameless. Be in the parlour what you are in the pulpit. Let it not be said of you, as it was of one, that when he was in the pulpit, he preached so well that it was a pity he should ever come out of it; and that when out of it, he acted so inconsistently that it was a pity he should ever go into it. Though cheerfulness may, and indeed should mark your hours of relaxation, and of social intercourse,—yet let it be, as it ought, the chastened hilarity of *the man of God*, and not the noisy and frivolous mirth of the mere man of the world. If your heart is deeply engaged in your work, and you cultivate a spiritual frame of mind, and act up to your own convictions of what is proper—convictions founded on the directions of the inspired volume, you will be preserved from a rock on which so many of the brotherhood have struck, and foundered at once their comfort and usefulness.

Before I pass from this general topic, I would beg your attention to a few words of advice, with reference to the conduct it will be your wisdom to adopt with reference to *your own people*—*to sister churches*—and *to your brethren in the ministry*.

With reference to *your own people*, all I have to say at present is,—Be kind and accessible to all. Let the poorest and humblest of your flock find the ear of his pastor ever open to his requests for spiritual instruction and advice; and such requests there is reason to hope will flow in upon him. A cold repulsive manner will close the hearts of your hearers against you,—not a single secret of their bosoms will be revealed; and how in that case can you do more than shoot your arrows at a venture? How can you speak to their individual circumstances?—and constrain them to say, “This man

was surely sent by God; for he has brought me the very food and medicine which my case required." While you must always act under the influence of manly and sacred principles, and while it is right you should yield to the impulses of generous and sanctified friendship, yet your official character, in connection with the imperfection of human nature, requires that in this respect you should exercise much caution and discriminating prudence; for there are few individuals in any church to whom the confidence of a minister may be safely given,—if there be, it may be a great comfort and advantage to him. But this is not always—perhaps indeed very rarely—the case. Be sure that you know those well into whose arms you throw yourself. A confidential friend is of no use, unless you can pour into his ear what prudence would restrain you from uttering in the market-place, and obtain advice from him in difficult and delicate circumstances. Now there are some men who cannot bear ministerial confidence. They would be carried off their feet by it. Others again are unfit for it. They may have no intention to injure either you or any one else; but they are leaky vessels,—they can contain nothing that is put into them. You in effect ascend the house-top, and publish what you have to say in the face of the world, when you hold as you imagine confidential intercourse with them. In short, though I do not say a confidential friend is not desirable, I would rather advise you—from the difficulty of finding one—to endeavour to rise above the necessity of seeking such a friend. Keep your own eyes, and your own ears; and keep a bridle so perpetually upon your tongue, that if the whole world were your auditors, you would have no occasion for regret or shame.

With reference to *other churches* and congregations,

be ever ready to assist them to the full extent of your power. The interest and welfare of your own particular flock should ever lie near your heart; but you must not overlook your connection with the general church of God, and the duties which grow out of that relation. All the congregations of the faithful form but one body,—a body broken into various divisions, that they may operate more advantageously in overthrowing the empire of darkness, and extending the kingdom of God in the world. The success of one division is chiefly valuable from its connection with and bearing upon the grand result. To look with coldness upon other divisions, and to refuse to them our aid when we can render it, is to be a traitor to the general cause, and to prefer the honour of the handful of men, with whom we stand immediately connected, to the success of the whole army; that is, it is to prefer our own honour to that of Christ. It is extremely easy for the principles of self-deception to operate here. Can we be wrong, say some with astonishment, in seeking the prosperity of the particular church and congregation with which we stand connected? I would answer,—You may prosecute a lawful and indeed important end under the influence of very improper motives. There is something respectable in the eye of the world in standing connected with a flourishing society. The unholy ambition of rendering our church and congregation the first church in the town, or the county, that we may wrap ourselves up in a sense of our importance, has drawn forth the exertions of many, who imagined all the time they were actuated by an exclusive desire of promoting the kingdom of Christ. If a congregation expends all its zeal upon itself,—if it displays little interest in the prosperity of neighbouring ones,—if it puts forth no helping hand to assist them,—and especially if it views

their success with the cankered feelings of envy and jealousy, there can be no doubt that its members are grossly deceiving themselves, if they imagine they have any pure unadulterated regard to the glory of God, and the extension of his kingdom.

Bear with me if I enlarge a little upon this point, as there are few things in the dissenterism of the present day more offensive to me than the prevalence of this evil, against which I would guard you. To an individual who is deeply concerned for the honour and prosperity of our denomination, scarcely anything can be more humbling and affecting than the sad lack of public spirit amongst us. How little disposed are our churches to regard themselves as constituting one army, and to feel that the success of one is the success of the whole! How feeble and lifeless the sympathy which pervades the body! How inconsiderable, in the case of any one society, is the joy which the prosperity of sister churches produces! How little regret does their want of success awaken! Nay, does not truth compel us to acknowledge, that when the localities of churches are contiguous, they are apt to mourn over each other's growth and enlargement, and only to rejoice in each other's downfall? "*Tell it not in Gath.*" "*Proh Pador.*" Even heathenism itself would be disgraced by such conduct. I know not, however, that heathenism bears upon it so foul a blot. I fear, it is exclusively visible upon Christians; and until it is purged away, the prospect of extensive usefulness in the country must be in a great measure visionary. Be, my young brother, upon your guard here. Not only do not manifest anything like envy and jealousy, but do not feel it. Strangle the viper on the first symptoms of existence. Regard yourself as a minister of the universal church—as bound to lend a helping hand to any

division of the great army which may require your assistance. Endeavour to identify yourself with neighbouring and sister churches. Consider their sorrows, your sorrows; their joys, your joys. Consider their declension, your declension; and their prosperity, your own.

Much of your comfort, if not usefulness, will depend upon your conduct towards *your brethren in the ministry*. With reference to them I would say—

First,—be brotherly. Cherish towards them those feelings of confidence and Christian affection which the relation in which you stand to them is adapted to inspire. Let your heart and your house be ever open to them. Let them see that you are forward, and at all times, to render them any assistance in your power. Be willing to recognise and to applaud their virtues and their talents; be backward to perceive their faults; and suffer nothing but dire necessity to extort from you any allusion to them.

Secondly,—be humble and unassuming. Be ever ready to take the lowest place. You will not be suffered to remain at the bottom, if you really deserve to be at the top. Piety and talent will find their level. A moderate share of ministerial qualifications will ensure your respectability and usefulness, if they are set in the beautiful gold of humility; but if you tarnish the lustre of your acquisitions by forwardness, assumption, and pride, you might, even with the talents of an archangel, go through the world without a single friend, and at length sink into an unlamented and dishonoured grave. I am especially anxious to press this direction upon your notice. Young ministers do not know themselves so well, when they first embark in the work, as they will do after the lapse and experience of a few years; and they have sometimes done or said things, as they emerged from the

seclusion of the college, upon which, in after life, they could never look back without confusion and shame. Remember your youth, your inexperience; and while you throw the warmth of your first affections upon your older brethren in the ministry around you, they will cheerfully give you all the benefit of their longer standing in the work,—a circumstance which may be of more advantage than you now imagine.

SECONDLY.—On this head of discourse I would say,—Take heed not only to your *conduct* before men, but to THE STATE OF YOUR OWN SOUL BEFORE GOD. You cannot but feel the paramount importance of this direction, and therefore I need not dwell at any great length upon it. Allow me however to press the consideration upon your notice,—I pray God deeply to imprint it upon your heart,—that if the flame of personal piety be suffered to expire, or to wax dim, everything must go wrong. “The thoughts that breathe” will never be the creations of your mind. “The words that burn” will never fall from your lips. The ice in your bosom will freeze everything that proceeds out of your mouth. Your active exertions in the cause of Christ will be in danger of declining with the relaxing vigour of the spring which had given the impulse. Or if some subordinate and unworthy motive should prevent your becoming a perfect drone, and compel you to assume a show of vigour, your duties will be gone through without interest and terminated with pleasure. In such a state as this you can taste no delight—you can expect no success. A depressing and enfeebling consciousness that all is not right with you will unfit you for exertion, and render your heart as barren of all joy as the flinty rock is of moisture. Take heed then not only to your conduct, but to your heart also. Live near to God. Cultivate intimate and habi-

tual communion with God. The two grand streams which feed the flame of piety are prayer and a devotional study of the word of God. Let not, oh let not either one or the other be neglected! Be a man of prayer; be mighty in the Scriptures. Let the word of God be the man of your counsel; so will you become a scribe well “instructed unto the kingdom of heaven,” bringing forth “things new and old” out of the treasures you have thus collected.

II.

“TAKE HEED TO YOUR MINISTRY,”—to the MOTIVES by which it is actuated,—to the MANNER in which it is conducted.

In the FIRST place, take heed to the *motives* by which your ministry is actuated,—that you are influenced at all times by, I will not say merely a supreme desire, but an *exclusive* desire to promote the glory of the great Head of the church, by extending the triumphs of his gospel in the world. In all things it becomes you to be conformed to your exalted Head. Now there are two passages which, if we may so speak, lay near the heart of the Saviour—which exhibit the secret spring of that splendid career of benevolence which deserves the admiration of the whole intelligent creation. “The zeal of thine house,” said he, “hath eaten me up.” Here is his concern for the glory of his Father. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Here is his tender compassion for the souls of men. In each respect let him be your chosen, your bright example. Oh! my young friend, see to it that zeal for the glory of God,

and compassion for the souls of men, constitute the main, yea the *exclusive* spring of all your labours in preaching the gospel; and guard against contamination here. Here perhaps is the grand point of danger. This is the point which needs to be guarded with the most anxious and trembling solicitude; for if your motives suffer any degree of perversion, the evil will not—cannot stop there. It will infallibly reach to every word you utter—to every action you perform. And great and fearful is the danger in these times, and especially in our denomination, of suffering perversion here. While congregations are clamorous for the exhibition of talent in the pulpit, and desire rather to be amused by a splendid diction, and a profusion of ornament, than to be fed with the wholesome words of truth and soberness,—while the enlargement of the stores of the intellect, or the mere gratification of the feelings of taste, is sought after by many rather than growth in spirituality of mind,—how can it be wondered at that multitudes of purveyors for this corrupt and perverted appetite should spring up in every part of the country, who, by their extravagance and finery and false taste, contribute greatly to perpetuate the very evil to which they owe their existence and popularity? Let it be your care never to descend to the meanness, and never knowingly to be guilty of the sin, of uttering a single word in the pulpit which is not prompted by the exclusive desire of promoting the great objects of your ministry. Guard, I beseech you to guard most anxiously, as you desire the approbation of Him whose servant you are, against seeking your own honour instead of the honour of your Master—against aiming to shine and dazzle in the pulpit. There is no point with respect to which the Christian is so much in danger as that which relates to the motives from which he acts; and

in the case of a Christian minister, there is so much to excuse and hallow a desire of reputation and popularity, that it may easily come to be sought after for its own sake, and not as auxiliaries to usefulness. In all cases this is wrong, disgraceful, impious. You cannot mistake me as advising you to abandon all regard to reputation: I only wish to impress strongly upon your mind the necessity of subordinating this and all other considerations to the desire and pursuit of usefulness. This is the only motive which will bear the scrutiny of the great day; and therefore the exclusive inquiry of a minister, in preparing for his pulpit exercises, and in entering the sacred desk, should be, "What can I say that is adapted to promote the glory of God, and to do good to the souls of men?" If you set out with a firm determination, in the strength of God, to make usefulness the grand end and object of your course, you will—there is every reason to hope—have to take up your own reputation by the way; but if the latter be pursued, though only under the show and semblance of an auxiliary to the former, you will be in danger of stopping short after you have gained your point, and so of accepting—miserable substitute!—the honour which cometh from man, in lieu of the approbation of your Maker.

SECONDLY.—Take heed to the *manner* in which your ministry is conducted.

First.—Let it be *plain*; that so it may be understood, and may thus support your hopes of being rendered useful. By attending to this direction, your conduct will be conformed in this point of view to that of one who well deserves your imitation. "And I, brethren," said Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, "when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And

my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom; for Christ sent me not to preach the gospel with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." And when I say, "Let your ministry be plain,"—I mean, first, let it not be above the mental range and comprehension of the generality of your hearers. Should you find a major part of the congregation over which the great Head of the church has placed you of a lower grade of intellect, and on a lower form in the school of Christ than yourself, by all means endeavour to elevate them—to raise them to your own standard—to quicken their spiritual growth, until you have the pleasure to see them young men, and even fathers in Christ. But this must be done by stooping to their level, and taking hold of them that you may conduct them forward; and familiarly explaining one difficult truth after another, till they are prepared to accompany you into more abstruse speculations, and to rise with their teacher in the loftiest excursions he himself may be able to reach. If, on the contrary, you ascend at once the hill of abstraction, you may be wondered at by the listening gaping multitude below, but you will leave their minds just where you found them.

Further: when I say *be plain*, I refer not only to the matter of your sermons, but to the language in which your ideas are clothed. Avoid all words which are not in familiar use, and so not easily and generally understood. It is infinitely absurd in a public teacher—to say nothing of the guilt of the thing—to sacrifice on the shrine of vanity the very object of his mission, the instruction of his people. The direction I am now giving you is by no means inconsistent with the utmost degree of elegance of diction. It is not equivalent to an injunction to be coarse, vulgar, tame, uninteresting,—to

be in short common-place as to sentiment and matter, and barbarous as to style. On the contrary, some of the choicest specimens, both of reasoning and eloquence, are remarkable for their plainness and simplicity. In the sermons of the most classical and eloquent preacher of the present day, you will not find a word difficult to be understood; while the sermons of others are stuffed beyond ordinary comprehension or endurance.

Secondly.—Be practical. The Bible is altogether a practical book. It does not aim to lodge certain truths in the understanding merely; but through their all-pervading influence, accompanied with the Divine blessing, to change the conduct and amend the heart. And hence, while it lays down certain fundamental doctrines to be believed, it exhibits their practical bearing upon the affections and the life of those who receive them. It should be the desire of every minister of the gospel to copy this example,—to show, in other words, how a Christian should feel and act in every relation he sustains—in every situation in which he can be placed in the present world. Such I trust will be your conduct; although a hue and cry of legality should be raised against you, in consequence of your determination to adhere to the standard of the word of God.

And when I say *be practical*, I mean not only enforce generally upon your hearers a conduct and conversation becoming the gospel of Christ, but descend into the detail of practical duties. The design of practical preaching is to show the nature and extent of those requirements which Christ has laid upon us. And it is here, I apprehend, that most evangelical ministers especially fail. They are not deficient in their general exhortations to obedience. They do not neglect to state in strong and unequivocal terms its absolute necessity in order to

admission to the kingdom of heaven; but they do not explain fully what that obedience is. They are too apt to satisfy themselves with vague statements and descriptions. They do not trace and exhibit Christian duties in all their minute ramifications; so that it is possible for the attendants upon such a ministry to sin through absolute ignorance of what is the duty the Lord their God requires of them. Let not this defect be chargeable upon your ministry. Go into the detail of the practical department of Christianity. Exhibit the preceptive part of our holy religion, in all the length and breadth of it; so that when even minor transgressions are chargeable upon any of your hearers, it may not be because you have not accurately and minutely described their duty.

Thirdly.—Be evangelical. I mean by this, first, let those doctrines which are usually so denominated—the doctrines of grace—form main and prominent topics in your ministrations. Act not as some men do, who introduce them as sparingly and cautiously as if they were about to let loose some beasts of prey among the people of their charge. Never speak as if you were ashamed of them; but let it invariably appear that you regard them as the life of your own soul, and essential to the spiritual life of those of your hearers. Preach the fall of man: his ruin in Adam,—his recovery by Jesus Christ. Enlarge upon the glories of his person and work,—the absolute necessity of an interest in him,—and the divinely appointed medium of union with him, viz. that faith which is of the operation of the Spirit of God. These are the doctrines which God has uniformly blest to the salvation of the souls of men; and to expect success in our labours, when these doctrines are banished from our pulpit addresses, is like attempting to draw an abundant crop from a field upon which Jehovah has for-

bidden the clouds to shed any moisture. At no time, and in no circumstances, preach a sermon which does not contain an explicit statement of the way of salvation. It is worth wandering a hundred miles from your text, and your subject, to gain an opportunity of saving a soul from death, and thus of covering a multitude of sins.

Again: when I say *be evangelical*, I mean exhibit every part of the Christian system in its connection with those essential doctrines of Christianity which constitute the foundation of the system. The doctrinal and experimental and practical branches of our holy religion form one beautiful and consistent whole, of which the atonement of Christ is at once the centre and support. It would be as absurd, says an excellent writer, to affirm that there is a single lane in the country which does not lead to the metropolis, as to suppose that there is a single doctrine, or promise, or precept in the word of God, which is not connected directly or indirectly with the cross. We preach evangelically when, whatever be the subject of our discourses, this connection is pointed out and insisted on. And while under the influence of our former direction you preach doctrines practically, the present will teach you to preach duties or precepts evangelically—to be careful while you exhibit the extent of Christian duty—to derive and collect your motives to the discharge of it from the cross of Christ, from the love of God in the gift of his Son. The design of practical preaching is to exhibit duty; the design of doctrinal, to impel to the discharge of it. The one supplies us with the rule; the other, the spring. Both are necessary; and neither can be omitted, without giving a maimed and mutilated exhibition of the religion of Christ. I need scarcely bid you—

Fourthly,—be faithful. Keep back no part of Divine

truth, through fear of man which bringeth a snare. Be close and pointed and fervent in your appeals to the consciences both of saints and of sinners. Respect not the persons of men. Flatter not the rich, because they are rich. Spare no sin, by whomsoever committed. Endeavour by all the means in your power to rouse the slumbering consciences of sinners, to reclaim backsliders from the error of their ways, and to stimulate Christians in the discharge of their duties. But in doing all this, take care to be—

Fifthly,—affectionate. Let all you say in the pulpit really be, and appear to be, the overflowing of a heart deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of your hearers. And in order to this, endeavour to obtain more impressive and affecting views of the infinite evil of sin, and of the dreadful condition of those who are under its guilt and power. Think of the horrors of that pit of destruction from which you, through the grace of God, have escaped; and of the ineffable and unfading and eternal glories of that world to which you are going. And remember that, while some of your hearers are self-deceived, and going down to hell with a lie in their right hands, there are others who rather than relinquish the pleasures of sin will brave all the horrors of the bottomless pit. And this will excite an anxious desire to save them; it will awaken the tenderest compassion for their unhappy condition; it will give an earnestness to your manner—a tender and touching character to all your addresses, which, convincing your hearers that they flow from genuine affection, can scarcely fail to make their way to their hearts.

Suffer me to press this direction upon you as one of great importance. “The servant of the Lord,” said one, who well knew what is in the heart, “must not strive;

but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." I have uniformly observed that that ministry is the most successful one, to which the character of affectionate may be applied, which exhibits the largest measure of tender solicitude for the souls of men. And since there must be a perennial spring of love in the heart of a minister to supply him with perpetual words and tones of tenderness, let me beseech you to look up with unwearied supplication to the God of all grace, to enlarge the fountain of compassion in your own breast. Oh how miserably cold and frigid are our feelings in this point of view! It is here, perhaps, that most ministers are mainly defective; and it is a defect that has a thousandfold more noxious influence upon our ministry than any defect of professional knowledge. What good can we expect to do till the ice within our own hearts is melted? Let us direct our prayers to Him who is able to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Lastly.—Be diligent and persevering. Listen to the inspired admonition,—"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." "Take heed unto thyself, and the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear you." Be not discouraged, although the measure of success which your heart desires should not be immediately granted. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." Here is an example for you. "Be ye also patient." It is painful doubtless to labour without fruit, yet it should not

paralyze our exertions. It is ours to labour—to labour without fainting, without intermission, till the grave open to receive us. “Be thou faithful unto death, and” God “will give thee a crown of life.”

I will only add, let not your ministrations be confined to the pulpit. In private also, and from house to house, let it be your care to instruct the ignorant, to reprove gainsayers, and to encourage the faith and hope of the people of God. I would advise you to make your private visiting bear upon the great object of your ministry; and never to go where you must sink your character as a minister, and lose sight for the time of the grand purpose of your being.

Finally: my brother, let me sum up all my hints and suggestions in the language of inspired truth,—
“TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF, AND TO THE DOCTRINE.”
“WATCH THOU IN ALL THINGS, ENDURE AFFLICTIONS, DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST, MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY.”
“FEED THE FLOCK OF GOD. BE AN ENSAMPLE TO THE FLOCK. AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD SHALL APPEAR, YOU SHALL RECEIVE A CROWN OF GLORY THAT FADETH NOT AWAY.” AMEN.

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